United Nations A/55/PV.7

General Assembly

Official Records

Fifty-fifth session

7th plenary meeting
Friday, 8 September 2000, 9 a.m.
New York

Co-Chairperson: Ms. Tarja Halonen ..... (President of the Republic of Finland)
Co-Chairperson: Mr. Sam Nujoma ..... (President of the Republic of Namibia)

The meeting was called to order at 9.05 a.m.

Addresses on the occasion of the Summit *(continued)*

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will hear an address by His Excellency Retired Colonel Yahya Jammeh, President of the Republic of the Gambia.

President Jammeh: We have gathered here once more to not only take stock of the achievements and shortcomings of the United Nations at this end of an era, but also to chart a new agenda of participation and collective commitment by evolving a better and more responsive role for our Organization in the new millennium. As we speak, despite the 50 years of existence of the United Nations, the international community still remains preoccupied with the same chronic concerns of survival and advancement — objectives that have always been the subjects of recommendations, resolutions and decisions of virtually all international meetings. Time and time again, the adoption of resolutions and the successful attainment of objectives set continue to either elude us or yield only meagre reward for our efforts.

The convening of this Summit challenges us to take far-reaching decisions relating specifically to the right to development, the fair and equitable participation of developing countries in globalization and liberalization, practical commitment to poverty eradication, North-South technical and economic cooperation, and last but not least, the promotion and preservation of international peace and security. All these are desirable and achievable objectives, provided we are prepared to agree unreservedly to commit ourselves, our Governments and the required resources to their attainment.

Our Organization enjoins us world leaders and citizens to combine forces to bring about a brighter future for humankind by ushering in a more balanced and equitable world devoid of social injustice, economic deprivation, hunger and diseases, as well as senseless wars. This dream can only be realized through the establishment of permanent peace and security across the globe. It is a fact that democracy, social development and justice can not take place in the absence of peace.

International peace and security can bring about economic wonders around the world, especially in Africa. But how do we bring about permanent global peace and security? This can be achieved only through tolerance, love and caring for each other. We must ensure an equitable and a just distribution of the world's resources and wealth and inculcate the spirit of caring and sharing to replace the present world economic order. We must replace the rationale of "super profit-making" with the rationale of super welfare or super humanity to bring about the narrowing of the gap between the rich and poor nations of our global village.

The present imbalances and lack of fair adjustments in our participation in the process of

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

00-63522 (E)

globalization should also be addressed so as to enable developing countries to take advantage of world economic growth by mobilizing both domestic and external resources for sustained economic growth and development.

The promotion of peace and democratic values and principles is linked to the development of good relations between Governments. It is for these reasons that my Government considers the failure of the United Nations to respect the dignity and rights of 23 million Taiwanese to membership in our esteemed Organization as a serious setback to the professed universality of the United Nations and a gross contradiction to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In like manner, the economic embargo on Cuba has proven to be very counterproductive and it is my Government's hope that the international community's recent change of attitude would usher in renewed cooperation and reconciliation with that great country.

The United Nations has immense potential to serve humanity well, within the framework of multilateralism. Its effectiveness or failure depends entirely on Member States and what we make of it. Indeed, against the backdrop of fundamental changes in the international scene, the reforms of the United Nations system, especially reform of the Security Council, require urgent attention to ensure transparency and fairness, based on proportionate representation and sharing of responsibilities.

The United Nations should be the moral standard bearer of humankind, ensuring justice, equality, peace and stability around the world and among nations, irrespective of size, geographical location or economic status in the twenty-first century and beyond. It should be a source of hope for the desperate and of solace and succour for the afflicted, and inspire confidence among the downtrodden and destitute the world over. In this way the notion of "We the Peoples" will have relevance to our profession of faith in our common humanity. Then, and only then, can we claim the twenty-first century, strengthened in our resolve to make this planet a better and more productive one where humankind can live in dignity and peace.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Miguel Angel Rodriguez Echeverría, President of the Republic of Costa Rica.

President Rodríguez Echeverría (*spoke in Spanish*): We respond to the call of the United Nations to celebrate together the dawn of a new era, an era of progress and hope for humanity.

From the last century, we inherited innumerable achievements, but also grave shortcomings. Mankind's work is unfinished.

We cannot allow ourselves to feel satisfied. Urgent challenges demand response. Costa Rica comes to this Millennium Assembly convinced that we must work together to transform those challenges into the achievements of the new millennium.

We must not forget that 11 million girls and boys under the age of 5 die annually due to preventable causes. Over the last two years, Costa Rica was able to reduce infant mortality by 17 per cent, even though it had a low rate to begin with. However, it is too small a country to save those millions of children who die; 30,500 will die today. These deaths demand our collective action.

We must not forget that 130 million girls and boys do not have access to primary education and that due to gender inequality, millions of women see their right to education hampered. We have an illiteracy rate of only 4.4 per cent in Costa Rica and we are pleased to know that it is even lower among women. But we are a small country and there remains work to do. Creating a society of opportunities on the entire planet requires the effort of all nations.

We must not forget the millions of lives lost in the wars of the twentieth century. My country eliminated the army more than half a century ago to invest in education and health. Today our health system is better even than those of developed countries and we are the healthiest Latin American society, according to the World Health Organization and *The Economist*. However, our country cannot contribute more so that the billions of dollars spent on arms and armies be redirected to human development, as they should be. That requires the commitment of all.

We must not ignore the damage caused to future generations by the levelling of thousands of square kilometres of the planet's forests. Costa Rica is developing a national pay system for environmental services. However, to mitigate the effects of greenhouse gases and to preserve our forests to the benefit of humanity, the effective commitment of all is

required to create an international market for the sale of environmental services.

Knowledge, information and access to the new technologies are key today to generating well-being. The new frontiers today are technological. Thus, as we did at the last session of the General Assembly, we agree with the need to motivate the massive distribution of vaccines and medicine in the most needy sectors of humanity, before Jeffrey Sachs' farsighted warning. This year we are united by the commitment to reduce the digital divide so that injustice and inequality do not increase. That was the warning of the Holy See a few weeks ago. On that same day, Costa Rica initiated the programme called "Communication without Borders", and it became the first country to offer free electronic mail to the entire population.

We must not forget the promotion of democratic values and human rights, deeply rooted in Costa Rican tradition. For that reason, we celebrate democratic consolidation — due to recent elections led by brilliant Government statesmen, after long periods with the same governing party — being enjoyed by Mexico and the Republic of China in Taiwan, which deserves an appropriate place within international organizations. We highlight the Secretary-General's support for the University of Peace to promote those values and we firmly support its efforts for all countries to ratify the human right treaties, because enforcement and respect for these should be limitless. In this new millennium of hope, the multilateral application of international law must ensure, in addition to sovereignty, the enforcement of that law based in the dignity of the human being.

Today the world's poorest societies are experiencing the serious consequences of the artificially driven increase in oil prices. On the average, 77 million barrels of oil are consumed daily. Given that its overpricing is close to $10 per barrel, at the end of one year we would pay more than $280 billion in excess.

With that enormous amount of resources, 1,100 million people could receive adequate health care. Thus, the infant mortality could be reduced and longevity could be increased. With those resources, 28 million housing units could be built, or primary education could be offered to 550 million girls and boys or secondary education could be offered to 430 million youths.

This is the terrible cost in human terms of oil overpricing. This source of the impoverishment of millions of people must be halted. Today, more than ever, we require the commitment of countries and international bodies on this issue that affects the right of all people to human development. For that reason, I appreciate the decision made by the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela last night to support the Central American and Caribbean countries, which will be announced today by President Chávez.

The United Nations can and must respond to the challenges of the new millennium with our political and material support. To eliminate war, we must restructure the Security Council; to promote peace in terms of social justice, democracy and human development, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations Development Programme must be on an equal footing with the Security Council.

Today I ask the nations of the world to join efforts so that international solidarity will be the mark of our times; let every woman and man will feel like a member of one race: the human race; and let there be only one destiny: human development. Only in this manner will this new era be an era of progress and hope for humanity.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Hugo Banzer Suarez, President of the Republic of Bolivia.

President Banzer Suárez (*spoke in Spanish*): More than half a century ago, when the San Francisco Charter was signed, different times and other circumstances reigned. A war that had shaken humanity had ended. The maintenance of peace and international security constituted the essential objective of the United Nations. The political independence of new States and the promotion of democratic values, respect for humans rights and cooperation among the peoples were among its others goals. Disputes would henceforth be resolved by peaceful means.

Thus an era of hope was ushered in. These objectives and principles are still valid. However, the end of the confrontation between East and West did not bring substantial benefits in the economic field for the less developed countries. That conflict has been

replaced by a sort of antagonism between North and South — in other words, between the economic Powers and the nations that are struggling to improve their levels of growth.

It is certain that, in the period that began in 1945, the much-feared nuclear war did not take place, and it is also certain that important opportunities for cooperation opened up. In this sphere, the United Nations played an important role. Clearly, however, tensions persist with other characteristics, generated in essence by backwardness, poverty and inequalities, which have increased to a dangerous extent. Those factors have determined new divisions affecting contemporary society, which need urgent correction.

That is why we are gathered here today — to consider a new agenda incorporating the current challenges and preparing us adequately to meet effectively the challenges of the future. However, this Millennium Summit has to mean much more than that.

In my opinion, it is urgent that we reach agreements and assume commitments on a group of essential topics, because the millennium agenda cannot be reduced to a mere wishlist of good proposals. It should mean a major commitment of historical significance to leading our countries forward towards the common destiny we all seek — a future built upon the solid foundations of equity and justice, tolerance and dialogue, and respect for man, nature and the values of representative and participatory democracy; a future that would lead us to establish conditions that mitigate the inequalities, the origin of the conflicts of our times. For obvious reasons, I will touch on only some aspects of the reflection that the Secretary-General has requested of us.

There is ultimately a close relationship between freedom and poverty and between poverty and violence. Nobody can call free human beings who live chained to the limitations that destitution imposes upon millions of people. There can be neither economic nor political stability if we do not address social imbalances. Freedom is always threatened when poverty is present. We must balance the variety of interests, within a framework of inclusive prosperity, between those who have more and those who can only offer their labour. These are the roots of current and futures dangers.

Social demands are unquestionably legitimate. The commitment to fighting against poverty must be made under the principle of shared responsibility, as it is with the fight against the drug traffic, a field in which Bolivians have achieved spectacular results that are internationally recognized. According to the Secretary-General's report, more than 1 billion people subsist on less than $1 a day. In this era of knowledge, globalization must become an instrument to fight that painful reality and not to exacerbate the crises, as has recently happened.

We have a diagnosis of the problem that cannot be contested on technical grounds. I would stress that what is lacking are agreements that allow the promotion of economic development based on an ethic of solidarity more universal, more equitable and less concentrated and that distributes revenues in a better way. The shared responsibility that we propose has to be expressed in a truly democratic form in the terms of trade, where the economically large countries can clearly contribute in greater measure.

It is fundamental that, in a so-called open economy, markets not be closed with discriminatory measures and protectionist criteria. It is essential that differentiated preferential treatment be applied and that special support be given so that countries with weak institutional structures can move ahead, as Bolivia has done. Reforms are needed that will allow them to attract larger flows of capital. It is vital that debt-relief programmes be enacted to liberate many countries from the stranglehold of debt. Science and technology cannot become commodities for exclusion. They should be the shared wealth of human development in all corners of the Earth.

Only thus we will better distribute economic and political power throughout the world, ensuring that big and small States alike are guided by the same agenda on fundamental issues by means of a true democratic process in which the few may not dictate norms that the rest have to accept. Only with this vision will we carry through on the commitment that we have all undertaken at this Millennium Summit to respond to the same ethical values in the certainty that there can be no stable peace nor security in a world that is built on the foundations of vast disparities.

Now, the execution of such a great mandate requires a strengthened institution. The role of United Nations must therefore be given new impetus in the financing of development in order to balance its

responsibilities with the objectives of peace and security.

I hope that those who, 50 years from now, are to evaluate what we are doing today will confirm that we had the capacity to adopt the correct decisions and the will to apply them to the benefit of humanity.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Emil Constantinescu, President of Romania.

President Constantinescu (*spoke in French*): Our conference is called the Millennium Summit. We may consider whether we ought, first, to attempt to summarize the experience that mankind has accumulated over the course of the closing millennium or whether we ought to turn already to the new millennium about to start. The historic period that is coming to an end requires us to understand that the hope for an entirely innocent beginning at the threshold of the new millennium is as unfounded as the millennial terror of total catastrophe. We should embrace in equal measure the certainties of continuity and aspiration to progress that the experience of a millennium inspires.

Mankind has just reached a point in its history that is not only critical, but full of hope. After the tragic experiences humanity underwent on a global scale during this past century, we are seeing the birth, for the first time in history, of a universal culture of peace.

As a foundation of the culture of peace and guardian of equity, the United Nations has never ceased to play an essential role by putting its experience to good use. That role makes the United Nations a key actor in building the future. The calling of the United Nations is not just to be a body that manages spheres of influence. It was also conceived as a pragmatic institution and as an expression of a global vision. This philosophy, formulated at the inception of both the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is the basis of the Organization's future projects.

The United Nations is an extremely important actor in managing globalization to make it a process that provides maximum advantages, with as few negative effects as possible, for the development of all the world's societies and cultures. The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council should give priority attention to the effects of globalization, for public opinion could gradually become more hostile to it, and should develop fair common principles and practices to give globalization a framework for it to bring about the progress of all mankind.

As the current Chair of the Conference of New and Restored Democracies, Romania is directly interested in developing efforts aimed at consolidating democracies. This year we initiated and supported at the Commission on Human Rights a resolution entitled "Promotion and consolidation of democracy". We welcome the initiative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mrs. Mary Robinson, in proposing a joint declaration opposing discrimination, racism and all forms of xenophobia. The laws that govern our States are based on the presumption of innocence. Along the same lines, we need to adopt a common code of conduct for cultures and peoples based on a presumption of goodwill. Romania also has profound respect for United Nations action aimed at avoiding, or at least restricting, armed conflict and at guaranteeing dignity and fundamental rights for every human being.

Romania has unhesitatingly contributed to peacekeeping operations. Recently over 7,000 officers and policemen have been participating in United Nations operations in Somalia, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. In the same spirit, we have decided to provide additional concrete proof of our desire to participate. I therefore announce, on behalf of the Romanian Government, that we are ready to reconsider Romania's status with regard to the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations and voluntarily give up the reduction we have enjoyed as a member of group "C".

We believe that this new stage in international affairs requires a new consensus, to make the Security Council more energetic and avoid stagnation. One matter on which it seems to me agreement is already possible is the need to emphasize a preventive, not reactive, culture in the work of the United Nations, and particularly the Security Council. As the future President-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Romania will endeavour to promote the principles of such a culture of prevention, and will give continuous attention to harmonious and effective cooperation between the OSCE and the United Nations.

We are firmly convinced that, united, the nations of the world can confidently look to a common future of peace and mutual respect, and that the United Nations has both the calling and the capacity to give institutional form to this common hope for progress and human dignity that inspires us all.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Jorge Batlle Ibáñez, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay.

President Batlle Ibáñez (*spoke in Spanish*): We are here today to represent our peoples, 6 billion human beings. Without a doubt, we are all equal, but it is also true that we are all different. What unites us is what we all share, our natural rights, which can be summed up by a simple rule that we often forget: do as you would be done by.

In order to put that rule into practice, our country — Uruguay — has taken part in every initiative throughout the twentieth century to organize people's lives along the lines of peace and freedom. At The Hague Peace Conference in 1906 we proposed mandatory arbitration as a means of settling disputes between nations. Later we became Members of the League of Nations. We were founding members of the United Nations, and took part in drafting the Charter as part of the core group of drafters. We were the first to adopt the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice. Since 1952 we have continuously taken part in United Nations peacekeeping missions and operations.

The United Nations Charter contains irrefutable political wisdom. Our greatest challenge is to uphold the Charter in good faith and without duplicity. If we did so many of our problems would be diminished or would perhaps even disappear altogether.

Maintaining peace and reducing poverty are fundamental goals of the international community. But war, violence and poverty are the effects of much more deep-rooted causes. It is not just by addressing the effects that we will honour our commitments. It is essential to address their causes.

Freedom is indivisible. There can be no political freedom without all the other freedoms. Throughout their lives, human beings organize themselves into societies — forming families, ensuring the continuation of the species, giving their children shared moral values, and applying their energies and talents to many types of work. When this vital activity of the human family is thwarted because their fruits are not allowed to reach world markets, nations are weakened and impoverished and become easy prey to demagogy, lies, injustice and backwardness, and sink into violence, as we saw in the course of the last century. That is why one of the most important tasks of the United Nations in this millennium must be to guarantee our right to create and produce, as well as our right to offer and to sell our products. Free trade, about which so much has been said and so little done, is more necessary than ever for a planet made smaller and much more interdependent by globalization.

Our region, America, including Uruguay, has already undergone a period of globalization during the so-called Atlantic civilization, in the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. It served everyone well. We grew and, as a result, were able to consolidate a nation in which equality, justice and freedom prevailed.

That globalization had one great advantage: markets were open to the fruits of our labour and to the products of our land. Today circumstances are quite different, which is having adverse effects on the lives of our people. This political Assembly is a great Assembly of peoples, whom we, as heads of State and Government, represent. It is in this forum, at the highest and most representative level, that we must take the decisions and undertake the commitments that will determine our future and that of succeeding generations.

Uruguay believes that the struggle for that freedom is one of the fundamental tasks facing the United Nations in the next millennium.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Alberto Fujimori Fujimori, Constitutional President of the Republic of Peru.

President Fujimori (*spoke in Spanish*): At this Millennium Summit, at which we are collectively examining the role that the United Nations is to play in the twenty-first century, the Peruvian Government deems it necessary to look beyond key general aspects, which can be considered and discussed at a later date, to the question of securing economic resources, which can help to reduce extreme poverty. That is possibly the most important goal to emerge from this Summit.

To this end, we have to recognize the enormous proportions being assumed today by international drug trafficking — another issue we have decided to tackle. We believe that, without giving short shrift to direct efforts to eradicate this phenomenon, assets seized from drug traffickers should be used to achieve the aforementioned goal.

To date little is known of the fate of the thousands of millions of dollars that are being kept in secret accounts. We need mechanisms which, without violating the right to privacy of legal bank accounts, will nonetheless allow these ill-gotten gains to be confiscated for the benefit of poor countries. This would represent a major step forward in combating drug trafficking as well as a tremendous contribution to achieving this common goal and alleviating the difficulties of poor countries, which suffer the greatest harm as a result of the actions of criminal organizations.

In this way the endlessly postponed crop-substitution strategy could be funded. Crops such as coca leaves, opium poppies or marijuana could be replaced with alternatives, thus helping the farmers who are growing them out of necessity.

I put forward this proposal, which Peru regards as a tremendous and historic challenge for the United Nations in the twenty-first century — a century that must be a time for action and concrete achievements aimed at ensuring the welfare of peoples and safeguarding world peace and security.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Ernesto Zedillo, President of the United Mexican States.

President Zedillo *(spoke in Spanish)*: Mexico is attending this Summit confident that here, our United Nations will undertake serious commitments to confront the challenges ushered in by the new millennium.

The greatest challenge facing us is to ensure that every woman and every man can fully enjoy the fundamental freedoms of the human being — freedom to be educated, freedom to obtain food, freedom to safeguard health, freedom to work, freedom to participate in economic trade, freedom to hold beliefs and to express their opinions, and freedom to participate in public affairs and in decision-making. To ensure that these freedoms are be exercised not only by the most privileged among us but by every single person in every part of the world, we have at our disposal the proposals contained in the report of the Secretary-General and in the draft Millennium Declaration, which the Government of Mexico enthusiastically endorses.

Mexico welcomes the fact that the Millennium Declaration reaffirms basic principles such as respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the sovereign equality of all States and non-interference in domestic affairs.

It is Mexico's conviction that the political independence of nations and the self-determination of peoples must be fully respected, even in this new era of economic, financial and information globalization.

Mexico agrees with the Secretary-General that globalization offers great opportunities but that, for the time being, its benefits are being unevenly distributed.

From firsthand experience, we Mexicans know that globalization is not the problem. Rather, it is the reverse: globalization can be part of the solution, or, as the Secretary-General has said, it must become a positive force for the entire world population to resolve the real problems: poverty, marginalization and inequality.

This inequality, both among and within nations, has deepened, for while some are participating in globalization others are not, or cannot. In some cases, they do not participate because of a lack of political or economic freedom — because of a lack of democracy. Others, even given the presence of democracy, cannot participate because a lack of education, health and adequate nutrition prevents them from exercising their freedoms and from taking advantage of the potential of globalization.

Hence the great importance of firmly committing ourselves to working hard to achieve the draft Declaration's targets on education, health, employment and equality. Mexico supports those targets and subscribes to the idea of formulating national and collective plans of action to attain them. We support the targets because we are confident that we Mexicans have the grounding to do our share to attain them. We support them out of a conviction that if we sow freedom, we will reap peace and justice, well-being and harmony.

Every country has an unavoidable task of its own, a task it must carry out through its own efforts, but we all need the encouragement and the cooperation of the United Nations. We cannot make progress towards our goals without urgent reform of the United Nations to make it more democratic and representative, more efficient and useful for all, which will give it greater legitimacy and authority in the eyes of the peoples of the world. Only an Organization that has reformed to become democratic, and has thus been strengthened, can contribute to other crucial endeavours, such as the creation of a world free of drugs, small arms and terrorism, a world capable of preventing and confronting natural disasters, a world in which our children will have the freedom to forge just and sustainable development.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Abdurrahman Wahid, President of the Republic of Indonesia.

President Wahid: We are gathered in this forum to celebrate the existence of the United Nations. The United Nations has enabled us to tackle our problems. Even though not all problems can be solved, the United Nations itself has developed into an institution that is powerful enough to address the world's problems. Of course, some people say that the United Nations is obsolete. I believe that improvements will come in due time, and that they will come again and again. The world demands that we should work together and coordinate our efforts for the benefit of mankind as a whole. In that respect, I would like to welcome the new millennium as a time when the United Nations can develop into a more powerful body that will represent all of us in many areas.

This morning I had breakfast with the Secretary-General and with other heads of State to talk about information technology, and about how the Economic and Social Council can support the development of information technology for all countries Members of the United Nations. That is just one example of the things that can be done with United Nations coordination.

The third millennium is important because in this millennium we will be able to coordinate and to work together for the benefit of mankind as a whole. Of course, this means that we will have to look at the overlapping picture and devise a very effective way of tackling our problems. As members know, regional associations, such as the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) for example, must be considered along with entire continents, such as Asia — I often talk about the identity of Asia — and with international forums such as the United Nations. The sometimes overlapping workings of all three can aid and support each country's individual efforts to attain sustainable development. That is important because, without the existence of the United Nations, continent-wide groupings and regional associations, we will never be able to achieve the solidarity needed for such development.

Of course, we have different interpretations of what is taking place, for example the problem between us and East Timor and developments within the Indonesian side of Timor. Earlier, the Secretary-General called for the observance of a minute of silence for the death of United Nations personnel in Atambua; that is an example of the many incidents we must address and the many occurrences we must consider as an international body.

Being an optimist, I therefore look forward to the rest of the new millennium as a time when we will be able to strive together and to coordinate our efforts to develop together and attain results that will mean an improved lot for mankind.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Denis Sassou Nguesso, President of the Republic of the Congo.

President Nguesso (*spoke in French*): We congratulate the Secretary-General on his relevant report (A/54/2000), in which he reflects upon the problems and the challenges that the world is facing. We are most grateful for that analysis, as well as for the outcome of the South Summit of the Group of 77, which took place last April at Havana. The issues addressed there included good governance, peace and security, globalization, indebtedness and the fight against poverty; these are matters to which the people of the Congo attach the greatest importance as we emerge from the catastrophe caused by the repeated civil wars we have experienced of late. The Congo has emerged from these terrible challenges, wounded and torn apart.

In addition, we have made peace our sole priority. Peace is the priority because we must rebuild a shattered country.

In this regard, my Government has adopted an interim three-year post-conflict programme. For it to be implemented, international community support is necessary. Peace is a priority so as to bring about the conditions necessary to give new impetus to the democratic process. A major national debate on a draft constitution will soon take place as a preliminary to general elections.

Peace in the Congo will always be fragile unless Central Africa quickly regains its footing and stability. For this to happen, the conflicts that are still dividing the region — and particularly the most worrisome conflict, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo — must be properly settled. In this regard, the international community has the major responsibility. It is time to escape the shackles of procrastination and prevarication and to act in accord with the demands of history so as to save the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the entire region of Central Africa and the Great Lakes. It is time to create, without further delay, all the conditions necessary and seize every proper opportunity to come up with a comprehensive peace and stability settlement that will benefit all the countries in the region. It is time and urgent that the States in this enormous area come together and combine their will and energy to vigorously undertake the regional integration process.

Achieving definitive peace will require taking up this noble mission. This is why I suggest that we very quickly consider holding an international conference that brings together all the countries in the region of Central Africa and the Great Lakes, along with the international community, under the auspices of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity.

In speaking about the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, I would like to call attention to the fact that a humanitarian catastrophe is occurring in the north of my country, in the Likouala region. Between 70,000 and 100,000 refugees, fleeing the conflict in the north of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, have settled — without any sort of assistance and amid the general indifference of the international community.

The Headquarters of the United Nations is the best possible place to speak about human rights. May I be allowed here, from this rostrum of the nations, to appeal to the international community to take a look at its past — our common past — to recall what has been done on this earth. I am referring to the most enormous attack on human dignity — the black slave trade and slavery. Denying men and women their humanity, these practices were the greatest violation of human rights.

At this moment when we have just seen the end of the second millennium during which these tragedies of universal history were enacted, we appeal to humanity, to the international community here represented, to see that the black slave trade and slavery be acknowledged as crimes against humanity.

We are not seeking any reparations. Above all, it is a matter of history, there is an obligation to remember. It is a matter of the truth and of dignity for humanity. Thus the dark page of the millennium that has ended can be turned once and for all.

When one is at a crossroads, there are signposts that one must know how to read, there are symbols that one must know how to interpret, if one is not to be misled and make incorrect choices.

The United Nations is at a crossroads, together we must make sure that it is put on the right road to save the world from collective regression. This right road is that of the reform that has been suggested by, aspired to and demanded by the majority of our nations. But, unfortunately, this reform continues to be postponed. The time has come to implement this reform.

This reform means arriving at an equitable representation of all the nations by strengthening the powers of the General Assembly and increasing membership in the Security Council. This reform also means making the Organization more human, to make man once again the centre of the Organization's concerns and interests, so that the United Nations can take once more its place at the heart of international relations and at the heart of universal issues and universality — for which the United Nations provides, at the same time, the foundation. This reform also means promoting the Organization's multilateral character and, above all, acting so that the United Nations can again play its proper role and take up its proper responsibility in peacekeeping. This reform means finally truly democratizing the United Nations so that it can be the forum for facilitating the true realization of the aspirations of all humanity and so

that it can allow the entire community of nations to participate in the real exercise of power within our Organization.

Africa is expecting that, as a result of such inspired reform, it will take its proper and rightful place.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Robert Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe.

President Mugabe: We are gathered here to observe the new millennium, whose arrival we have been privileged to witness. I want to begin by asking whether this passage of time is a marker of qualitative change in the human condition and in human relations, is it human change in qualitative terms? Has the passage transported us all into a new commonwealth of diverse yet truly united peoples of the world living in one village? Are all the peoples of the world truly in the twenty-first century by the way they live?

Sadly, most of us in Africa and the developing world are still stuck in problems dating back to the days of slavery and colonialism. We remain burdened with the unfinished business of the twentieth century, including even the problem of the "colour line".

In Zimbabwe, and only because of the colour line arising from British colonialism, 70 per cent of the best arable land is owned by less than 1 per cent of the population, which happens to be white, while the black majority is congested on barren land. We have sought to redress this inequity through a land reform and resettlement programme that will effect economic and social justice, and this in terms of our constitution and laws. But what has been the response of former imperialist quarters?

Their response has been staggering beyond description. My country, my Government, my party and my own person have been labelled "land grabbers", demonized, reviled and threatened with sanctions in the face of accusations of reverse racism. W. E. B. Du Bois must be turning in his grave for having thought the problem of the colour line would disappear with the twentieth century. But our conscience, of course, remains clear. We will not go back. We shall continue to effect economic and social justice for all our people without fear or favour.

Our world has shrunk into a global village, and time, place and distance continue to shrink inexorably by the day. The biggest challenge for us still remains not only cyberspace, nor the great superhighway responsible for shrinking our world, but demands of us an answer to the age-old question, "who is my neighbour?" Whichever part of the globe we find ourselves in, the questions that should be asked are whether the man, the woman, the country, the region and the continent on my doorstep are neighbourly and whether the culture or civilization of my neighbour truly coincides and blends with mine to enable us have peaceful and friendly coexistence.

The question my compatriots and I face in Zimbabwe, as put to us by our peasants, is whether a globalized environment will enable them to have a patch of land to till and whether the ugly anomaly which history gave them in respect of land ownership shall be resolved in order to enlarge their own freedom so they can begin to be like the rest of mankind. They ask why a predatory political economy that the United Nations rejected and helped fight in the 1960s, throughout the 1970s and in the 1980s now has once again found so many globalized protectors? They want to understand why a system which is at the centre of poverty, at the centre of race relations, at the centre of denying developing countries their sense of sovereignty and democracy is made to appear so right, just and fair.

We are either makers of a new world based on new democratic principles of economic and social justice or we remain in the old world with some conquering nations still set on old agendas of shrinking the rights of smaller nations as they enlarge their own conquests, sanctifying this under the cover of good governance, transparency, anti-corruption, democracy, human rights and digital technology.

We anticipate the risk of importing the spirit and the contradictions of the Victorian era of slavery and colonialism into the new millennium and the new world order. We also risk accepting the hypocrisy hidden in the demand for the democratic reform of national Governments and institutions in developing countries while doing nothing to reform the undemocratic structures and practices of international bodies such as the Bretton Woods institutions and indeed our very United Nations itself.

If the new millennium, like the last, remains an age of hegemonic empires and conquerors doing the same old things in new technological ways, remains the

age of the master race, of the master economy and master State, then I am afraid we in developing countries will have to stand up as a matter of principle and say no, not again.

The time has come for the practice of political and economic dominance of poor nations by the rich to give way to the birth of a new interdependent world that recognizes and respects the diversity and the dignity of all cultures and civilizations. In this connection, I am pleased that the United Nations has declared 2001 the "United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations".

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Burhanuddin Rabbani, President of the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

Mr. Rabbani (*spoke in Persian, English text furnished by the delegation*): Allow me at the outset to express our gratitude and appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, for his comprehensive, analytical, forward-looking, visionary and challenging report entitled "We the peoples: the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century".

The numerous specific goals and programmes outlined in this report could well be considered the United Nations plan of action for the twenty-first century. It is the only multilateral body with universal membership and a mandate, derived from its Charter, encompassing security, development, human rights and environmental protection.

The founding of the United Nations 55 years ago marked the victory of moral principles and the triumph of democratic values, and Afghanistan joined the United Nations the following year. While the Islamic State of Afghanistan remains strongly committed to the provisions, purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, this Summit presents a timely opportunity at the threshold of the new millennium, to rethink and reassess the United Nations goals, functions, successes and failures around the globe since its inception.

The Secretary-General's report sets out a practical vision for the Organization in a globalized world, one that has changed dramatically over the past 55 years. Among the key messages in this report is the need to make globalization more inclusive, thus creating more opportunities for all, and not to leave billions of people in a state of poverty and exclusion.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan fully agrees with the report of the Secretary-General that the twentieth century enjoyed unprecedented economic gains. However, 1.2 billion people still live on less than $1 a day. The combination of extreme poverty with extreme inequality within and between countries is an affront to our common humanity, a tragic situation requiring urgent global solidarity. In the past decade, more efforts were made for the expansion of global markets than for poverty reduction, human rights and environmental protection. Global solidarity necessitates that rich countries further open their markets to poor countries' products, as well as provide deeper and faster debt relief and better development assistance.

In order to cope effectively with these economic and social challenges, the Economic and Social Council should be further strengthened, thus enabling it to fulfil the duties attributed to it in the United Nations Charter.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan fully endorses the values and goals presented by the Secretary-General for this Summit's consideration.

Having endured two decades of ceaseless suffering, we earnestly wish that the Afghan nation will enjoy peace and security at the beginning of the twenty-first century. We desire the creation of a broad-based government in Afghanistan, under the auspices of the United Nations, so that our nation can start the task of reconstruction and development in an environment free from conspiracy and foreign interference, which have turned our land into a terrorist training camp, a centre for drug smugglers and a base for spreading instability.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Omer Hassan Ahmed Al-Bashir, President of the Republic of the Sudan.

President Al-Bashir (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to express my appreciation for the efforts and endeavours of the Co-Chairpersons in preparation for this historic event. On behalf of the Government and the people of the Sudan, and on my own behalf, allow me also to express our appreciation to Mr. Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General, who took

the initiative two years ago of convening this Millennium Summit to explore a new role for the United Nations in the twenty-first century. I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report in which he outlined this role.

It is the Sudan's strong belief that the United Nations continues to represent the ideal mechanism for the enhancement of international cooperation and global partnership. The United Nations remains indispensable and irreplaceable. To achieve its goals, we should reaffirm the principles that constitute the foundation of the United Nations, as enshrined in the Charter, foremost among which is respect for sovereignty of States, non-interference in their internal affairs and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

We view with satisfaction the Assembly's final document, which includes important elements such as solidarity, tolerance, freedom and pluralism. We should all endeavour to make this Organization more democratic and representative by reviving the central role of the General Assembly and enhancing its efficiency so that the United Nations can carry out its tasks.

There is also a great need to reform the Security Council, to make it more democratic and representative, and to improve its methods of work, including the issues of decision-making and the right to veto.

We appreciate the agreement among all Member States to give special attention to Africa, as set forth in the Declaration, which calls for effective measures to enable the African countries to overcome their economic difficulties, to achieve stability, to move towards development and to meet the challenges of globalization.

The four decades devoted to development have elapsed without having attained the desired goals for the developing countries, and for Africa in particular. This failure has been particularly reflected in the widening development gap between developed and developing countries, the increased levels of poverty in sub-Saharan African countries, the decline of official development assistance, the deterioration of terms of trade and the increase in the levels of external debt.

The convening of the Millennium Summit revives our hopes of overcoming the challenges facing international cooperation and development. In order to realize this, we call upon the international community, first, to cancel the external debts of the highly indebted poor countries, as proposed by the Secretary-General in paragraph 181 of his report (A/54/2000); secondly, to facilitate market access of developing countries' exports to industrialized countries; and, thirdly, to implement the commitment of 0.7 per cent of official development assistance by industrialized countries for development of the developing countries.

The Sudan understands the concerns of the international community regarding the armed conflict in southern Sudan. Here we reiterate the commitment of the Government of the Sudan to work for a political resolution of this conflict on the following basis: first, an immediate and comprehensive ceasefire in order to facilitate delivery of humanitarian assistance to the needy and as a necessary prerequisite for confidence-building and for the success of peace efforts; secondly, an immediate start to negotiations based on current peace initiatives; and thirdly, a just settlement that paves the way for a fair distribution of power and wealth, establishes rights and duties based on citizenship and guarantees total adherence to international human rights standards.

We take this opportunity to appeal to the international community to support our efforts to resolve this conflict and achieve peace, stability and development. We urge this gathering to use the Millennium Summit as an opportunity to reinforce the values of peaceful coexistence and to respect cultural, ethical and religious pluralism.

We assure the Assembly that we in Sudan will spare no effort to achieve these noble goals and to cooperate with all Member States on the basis of the principles of respect for the choices of others and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States. In fact, that is what our tolerant faith and traditions dictate. In the Koran Allah states:

> "O mankind! We created
> you from a single (pair)
> of a male and a female,
> and made you into
> nations and tribes, that
> ye may know each other.
> Verily the most honoured of you
> in the sight of Allah
> is (he who is) the most
> righteous of you."

(*The Holy Koran, 49:13*).

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Olusegun Obasanjo, President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

President Obasanjo: Humanity has come a long way out of the ruins of the Second World War thanks to this Organization, the United Nations. We have emerged from the era of cold war and incessant fears of global conflagrations. A new horizon is now in front of us, predicated on ever-widening possibilities for development in all spheres of human endeavours, resulting from unparalleled advances in science and technology.

But new challenges have also emerged: challenges of poverty and new diseases that have so far defied scientific knowledge and cure. The world is also faced with the scourge of internal conflicts which threaten regional peace and impede social and economic development.

Although the world has generally become a safer place to live in, thanks to the contributions of the United Nations, we must all feel deeply worried that the message of hope which the Organization has been spreading is yet to reach the millions of humankind for whom it is intended. For the vast majority of our peoples, grinding poverty has remained a fact of their everyday existence.

The national Governments to whom these millions look for succour find themselves in the unenviable predicament of helplessness, incapable of bringing meaningful changes in their people's well-being, due to the heavy burden of external debts which have crippled their capacities for national initiatives.

Old diseases, such as tuberculosis, which we all thought had been eradicated, have reappeared, with devastating consequences, especially in developing countries. In addition, we now have HIV/AIDS, which continues to defy cure, and has now combined with malaria, tuberculosis and other infectious diseases to form a lethal nexus with as much potential for devastation as war itself, and is thus a modern-day threat to world peace and security.

The new millennium is being shaped by forces of globalization that are turning our world into a village. Thus the new millennium will demand of us, more than ever before, to live and work together as members of one human family. But up to now globalization has meant prosperity only for the chosen few of the industrialized countries. For most of us in the developing world, globalization will continue to ring hollow and be of dubious value, until we see its positive effects on our fortunes. In short, globalization has to be seen to mean the eradication of poverty. Then, and only then, will the true spirit of good-neighbourliness reign in the new global village.

The world community is challenged to evolve a new system of international cooperation that will help to eliminate abject poverty throughout the world and integrate the developing countries into the globalized world economy. At the first South Summit of the G-77, held in Havana, Cuba, last April, it was resolved that a new and meaningful partnership with the industrialized nations needed to be forged in order to make this earth a better place for all of us.

We must all be concerned about the persistence of internal conflicts, more especially in our region of Africa. These conflicts have proved to be very brutal, savage and devastating. The unfortunate destruction of lives and properties and its effects on the weaker members of society, namely, children and women, remind us, as Members of the United Nations, that our objective of world peace is still beyond the reach of many communities. Our aim in the new millennium, therefore, must include a renewed determination to resolve these conflicts and prevent new ones so that together all humanity will reap the benefit of peace and march forward in harmony and prosperity.

External debt has emerged as the greatest obstacle to progress in developing countries. Indeed, we note with appreciation that a number of initiatives have been put in place. The reality, however, is that these measures are inadequate. The G-77 strongly urges creditor nations to seize this historic moment to unshackle the economies of developing countries by cancelling all their external debts. This is the only way in which these countries can be given the chance to effectively plan for the improvement of living standards for their peoples.

We are at a new dawn; what it portends we cannot say. But this much we owe to ourselves and to succeeding generations: a world where all nations, all races and all peoples can live in dignity and in peace with one another. We must all resolve to strengthen and

reinvigorate the United Nations for the work and the world ahead.

The reform of the United Nations, in particular the expansion and democratization of the Security Council, is therefore a task which can no longer be postponed if our Organization is to face up to the challenges of the new millennium. In this respect, the Group of 77 pledges its willingness to enter into meaningful dialogue with all our partners so as to re-energize the United Nations — indeed, a body for which there is no substitute — to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century and the third millennium.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah, Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah: Sixteen years ago, I had the honour of addressing this Assembly for the first time when my country was admitted to the United Nations. It was a different period of world history. The cold war then divided the world along ideological lines, and the threat of a nuclear holocaust was real. The smaller developing countries were particularly vulnerable. They were used as pawns in the global chess game. Brunei Darussalam was one such country. We were determined not to be drawn in.

In the United Nations we found shelter and assurance. It provided a forum where all Member States' sovereignty would be respected, and where all nations, large and small, would have an equal voice and one vote. The United Nations Charter gave small nations like my own a sense of hope and security. For the last 16 years, Brunei Darussalam has participated in the United Nations as a full member of the international community of nations. We have strongly supported the United Nations role in international affairs. We have done what we could to promote the principles and processes of the United Nations Charter. We are committed to continuing this within the limits of our resources.

The post-cold-war era has brought new challenges. Globalization, the result of the revolution in information technology, will break down traditional barriers and borders. Dynamic and powerful forces are at work and will increase economic cooperation and accelerate growth and development. This can lead to improving quality of life, higher standards of living and greater opportunities for all. The benefits are great.

But there are downsides to globalization. With increased movement across borders, transnational crime and terrorism have become serious problems. The disparity between North and South continues to grow as the poorer nations struggle to keep pace with the first world. Globalization could lead to the marginalization of the developing and less developed countries if they do not adapt themselves in order to maximize its benefits. There can be no going back to the past. As we begin the twenty-first century, we should examine and address the negative effects of globalization. These are challenges that go beyond the ability of individual Governments to tackle.

In the twenty-first century, the United Nations role as the conscience of the world is crucial to balance the interests of the successful and the less successful nations in the new economies of globalization. It is a conscience that needs to moderate the results of the winner-take-all paradigm of free-market competition.

Brunei Darussalam faces many of the same challenges as the developing nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America. To meet them, a country needs to adapt and respond quickly to an uncertain and constantly changing external environment. To do this, its most important resource — its people — needs to be equipped with the knowledge and tools necessary to give it a fighting chance.

I would therefore like to stress the critical importance of programmes, in particular those that focus on health and education. They play a crucial role in helping the development of many of the poorer and less developed countries. By investing in the future of the people of these countries, we will lay the solid foundation upon which these countries' futures can be constructed.

We should do so not merely out of a sense of moral obligation. The survival and progress of the less developed members of the international community is in our best interest. As globalization makes our world ever more interdependent, it is becoming increasingly difficult to separate ourselves from events that occur beyond our immediate regions. There are few matters that are local problems any more. This point was brought home in 1997 by the far-reaching effects of the financial crisis that swept through South-East Asia.

We cannot have a world in which the knowledge-based economies are racing along the information highway while the less developed countries are lagging

behind and struggling with disease, famine and poverty. The best way to ensure a stable international order is to provide developing and less developed countries with knowledge and opportunities for economic, social and technological advancement. This will require renewed commitment from all Members of the United Nations. It would entail a far greater responsibility than we have taken on thus far. This can be achieved if we all come together in a concerted effort. I therefore appeal to all members of the international community to accept this responsibility.

As we begin a new century and a new millennium, let us make every effort to achieve global peace, freedom, tolerance and prosperity in our time. We must allow the United Nations to concentrate its energies on making the world as we would all like to see it. This, I believe, would be the greatest tribute we could offer the Secretary-General and all those who have served the United Nations in the last half century.

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to address the Assembly and to share some of my thoughts on the direction and future of our Organization.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Islam Karimov, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

President Karimov (*spoke in Russian*): Allow me to express my appreciation for the opportunity to speak at the Millennium Summit. On the threshold of a new century, international security and stability are still among the fundamental problems facing the contemporary world. The only difference is that instead of remnants of the cold war and the associated obstacles, international terrorism, extremism, aggressive nationalism and separatism are the dangerous detonators that can undermine peace and stability. Uzbekistan fully supports the basic United Nations principle of the indivisibility of security.

Today it is obvious that there can be no comprehensive international security without regional security and the national security of individual States. Those — whether in Europe, the Americas or any other region — that are trying to create an exclusive security cordon to isolate themselves from ostensibly alien problems are blind to reality: today's world is tightly interrelated and indivisible. Experience has shown that ongoing wars, conflicts and confrontations in some regions or States inevitably extend beyond those bounds and take on a cross-border, transnational character, dragging additional territories and Powers into the heat of the conflict.

This may be seen in the Central Asian region, which is at present becoming a target for the expansionism and aggression of the forces of international terrorism and extremism, which harbour the ambitious goal of diverting the States of the region from their chosen road of democratic, secular development, and of setting up despotic clerical regimes in their place.

It is self-evident that the war in Afghanistan, which has continued for more than 20 years, is a principal source of that threat. Afghanistan has become a training ground and hotbed of international terrorism and extremism, and the main source and the warehouse of world drug production, which earns billions of dollars and fuels international terrorism. Areas bordering Afghanistan, first and foremost the States of Central Asia, are being turned into one of the easiest and shortest conduits for transporting hundreds of tons of heroin, mainly to the countries of Europe and North America. That example clearly shows the way in which two monstrous phenomena of our time — international terrorism and drug trafficking — are coalescing.

I wish to take this opportunity to say to the United Nations, the Security Council and the international community that the continuing war in Afghanistan poses as a threat to the security not only of the States of Central Asia, but of the whole world. We must do our utmost speedily to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Afghan problem and to help the long-suffering Afghan people to gain the peace for which they have waited so long. We support all initiatives to stabilize the situation in Afghanistan. I stress that the Tashkent Declaration on Fundamental Principles for a Peaceful Settlement of the Conflict in Afghanistan, adopted in July 1999 by the members of the Six plus Two group set up under United Nations auspices, remains timely and able to serve as the basis for negotiations among the main rival parties.

Along with the political measures taken in the framework of the United Nations, it is high time to draft an extensive programme for the peaceful post-conflict rehabilitation of Afghanistan, and for its economic and humanitarian renewal.

I turn now to the urgent and central need to strengthen the international community's fight against

the growing threat of international terrorism. Uzbekistan welcomes the proposal of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for an international conference on counter-terrorism to be convened under United Nations auspices. I am confident that through joint efforts we will be able to combat terrorism and extremism, but only if we fight not only against its manifestations but also, and primarily, against international centres with sizeable financial and other capacities, which mobilize and direct terrorists, and provide them with the most up-to-date weapons and equipment. It is hard to imagine what the world situation would be were those forces to obtain access to deadly chemical, biological and other weapons of mass destruction. In that respect it is now important to secure, not in words but in practice, the agreement of the Group of Eight to eliminate the financial sources of terrorist activity.

From this rostrum, I call on members to support Uzbekistan's initiative, put forward at the Istanbul summit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, on the establishment of an international counter-terrorism centre within the United Nations system.

Uzbekistan advocates strict and unconditional application by all States of the international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Without this, one can hardly speak about maintaining strategic stability either on the global or the regional level.

All of this adds to the importance of Uzbekistan's initiative to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia and of its rapid endorsement by the international community. We highly appreciate the Secretary-General's support of the activities of the regional expert group working to complete a regional draft treaty on a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

In considering the entire complex of regional problems, one cannot ignore the issues of ecological security and the environment. Both in the United Nations and in other international forums, I have repeatedly spoken of the problems of the Aral Sea basin. Because of its scope, the Aral crisis has spilled over the boundaries of the Central Asian region; it has become a problem of global importance; its pernicious influence is seen in climate change and biological balance; it has negative effects on health and on the gene pool of future generations.

I believe that no one needs to be persuaded of how dangerous and unpredictable the implications of the dying Aral Sea are for Europe and other areas of the planet, or of the consequences of indifference to this problem. To promote international cooperation in the field of ecological security and to enlist the finances of international institutions and donor countries, I propose the establishment of a council on the problems of the Aral Sea and the Aral basin, under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme.

The current challenges and risks require the dynamic adaptation of the entire United Nations system and its mechanisms to the complicated realities and perspectives and to the elaboration of new approaches to such issues as the maintenance of peace, security and stability. We understand United Nations reform, first, as accomplishing a set of measures to enhance its role and significance in tackling regional and global problems.

In this context, we think it necessary, first, to conduct a phased, gradual reform of the Security Council. The number of its permanent members should be increased to the benefit of developed and developing countries alike. It is expedient to increase the number of permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council. As the first step in this direction, we propose that Germany and Japan be included in the permanent membership of the Security Council, as those countries play a significant role in international affairs and, moreover, are currently the main sponsors of United Nations activities and of numerous humanitarian and charity projects and programmes.

Secondly, in order to make the United Nations reaction to global and regional challenges more operative and effective, we suggest the expansion of the authority of the Secretary-General.

Thirdly, in order to strengthen the role and responsibility of the Security Council in the prevention of military conflicts, instruments and mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of confrontations and disputes must be utilized effectively, in particular through the application of so-called peace-building mechanisms in the course of settling long-term conflicts.

In conclusion allow me to congratulate the Summit Co-Chairpersons, Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia, and Ms. Tarja Halonen,

President of the Republic of Finland, on their election to their demanding posts. I am convinced that our Summit will be successful.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by Mr. Bakili Muluzi, President of the Republic of Malawi.

President Muluzi: Let me begin by stating that my country is happy to endorse the Secretary-General's report, which is full of wisdom and insight and sets out the agenda for the United Nations in the years to come. We are especially pleased that the report highlights the many challenges which Africa continues to face and the need for a clear plan of action.

It is a matter of great concern that poverty continues to be a major challenge to humanity. It is a shameful scandal for mankind that so many must live in poverty while others live in extreme wealth. In my country, poverty reduction is the central goal of our policies, but our efforts continue to be hampered by factors beyond our control, including trade imbalances and unpredictable weather patterns resulting in recurrent drought. Today, Malawi's very basis of economic survival, tobacco, is likely to be phased out due to the international anti-smoking initiative. This is compelling my country to face the challenge of economic diversification. We have the will to take on this challenge, but we will need the sympathy and partnership of the wider family of nations.

Like other sub-Saharan African countries, Malawi continues to be weighed down by a crippling debt burden, which we believe is one of the great injustices of our time. Debt-servicing has diverted my country's meagre resources from effectively improving the quality of life of our people. While Malawi appreciates the benefits of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative, we remain convinced that total debt cancellation would help us much better. The money used to service these debts, which were inherited from an earlier generation of leaders, would best be used in our poverty reduction programmes, such as those relating to education, health, sanitation and infrastructures. There is much talk at this forum about poverty reduction, but there cannot be any poverty reduction if the children of Africa remain heavily indebted even before they are born.

Another very serious challenge threatening sub-Saharan Africa's progress is the HIV/AIDS pandemic. During the past decade, HIV/AIDS has inflicted havoc on our modest development plans. Unfortunately, the costs of drugs that help decelerate the impact of HIV/AIDS on patients are very prohibitive. I believe that the international community has a moral obligation and responsibility to ensure that cheaper drugs are available to our poor countries through grants and not loans. I am appealing for grants because our countries already have the burden of external debts hanging like a noose around their necks.

It is also a matter of great concern that conflicts continue to worsen the already existing conditions of poverty in a number of countries in sub-Saharan Africa. In such countries, most resources are being spent on weapons of war and destruction rather than on food for the people. In this regard, Malawi deeply appreciates the tireless efforts the United Nations is making towards the promotion of international peace and security.

We have also observed with concern the factors which seem to impede the Organization's peacekeeping operations. In some parts of Africa, for example, events have clearly shown the need for a strong mandate for peacekeeping missions. It is also evident that the Organization needs a mechanism by which it can take quick decisions on the deployment of peacekeeping missions during emergencies. Malawi therefore welcomes the recommendations of the Secretary-General on peacekeeping operations.

With regard to international trade, difficulties in accessing the markets of the developed countries persist. I believe that the developed countries have a duty to assist us in ensuring that we have the capacity for effective access to global markets and meaningful participation in the globalization process. As long as this much-touted globalization benefits only a few, the world cannot claim to be democratic and those who benefit from such imbalances cannot have a clear conscience.

The people of Malawi will continue to have strong confidence in the United Nations despite the many difficulties it is facing. The United Nations has suffered some reverses, but it can also look back at many triumphs, of which we should all be proud. Long live the United Nations. Long live the unity, peace and progress of mankind.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): Before calling on the next speaker, I must appeal to representatives to be good enough to keep silent in the General Assembly

Hall in order to maintain the dignity of the Assembly and out of courtesy to the speakers.

The Assembly will now hear an address on behalf of the Captains Regent of the Republic of San Marino by Captain Regent Her Excellency Mrs. Maria Domenica Michelotti.

Mrs. Michelotti (San Marino) (*spoke in Italian; English text furnished by the delegation*): The Captains Regent of the Republic of San Marino wish to express their sincere satisfaction at the convening of the Millennium Summit. Such an event brings together the most distinguished representatives of the international community, who are calling today more than ever for the affirmation of those principles that are the basis of peaceful coexistence among peoples and are essential for the effective implementation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Internationalization and globalization are by now irreversible, and respect for the cultural and historical identity of each people and individual along with the respect for the universality of human rights is fundamental. That being the case, we favour a multilateral approach, where economic and social development is a shared responsibility and threats to international peace and security are seen as a common concern. The United Nations must play a pivotal role and be the most effective instrument for cohesion and cooperation. To that end, a culture of solidarity and collaboration that guarantees real development for the future — especially for poor countries — is of paramount importance.

At the beginning of this new millennium, fighting poverty and indigence, which afflict a huge number of men and women, is a moral imperative that calls for stronger commitment on the part of the international community. Well aware of the need to rethink the current patterns of development and to reconsider the existing form of international cooperation, the Captains Regent welcome and fully support the report of the Secretary-General on the role of the United Nations and the challenges facing the international community in the twenty-first century.

The technological revolution, which brought about radical changes in the life of the twentieth century, cannot provide development opportunities only for industrialized countries. On the contrary, as an instrument of economic and cultural progress, it should also benefit less advantaged countries. Access to digital technologies can therefore play an unexpected and fundamental role in the education of people in areas where traditional infrastructures and services cannot easily be introduced. This new scientific breakthrough will in fact favour closer and intensified relations and ensure developments in a variety of areas, thus bridging the gap between North and South.

Proud of its 1,700 year history, the Republic of San Marino, as a clear example of solidarity, welcomes and is ready to support the United Nations intention to promote and finance projects designed to foster the knowledge of and ensure the use of information technologies in developing countries. San Marino would like to contribute to the training of groups of young volunteers who can guarantee wide access to information technologies for those who at present cannot take advantage of that huge development potential because of their economic and cultural circumstances.

Understandably, the whole of the international community — ourselves included — is now looking at the beginning of the century and of the millennium with a feeling of both hope and concern. It is to be hoped that the globalization process will help free developing countries from the hunger, poverty and excessive foreign debt that are crippling their economies and their development. We are confident that peace will be fostered and protected, thanks to more effective action on the part of international organizations. However, we are deeply concerned about the ongoing cases of local conflict, bloodshed and ethnic and religious intolerance that have dramatically re-emerged over the last few years.

Against that background, the Republic of San Marino has never questioned the central importance of the human being or the need to protect all fundamental rights, including civil and political rights. San Marino is committed to the International Criminal Court. It has strongly supported the abolition of the death penalty worldwide and has continuously participated in international solidarity projects to alleviate the suffering of men, women and children.

The Republic of San Marino, which we represent, believes that the United Nations is essential for the protection of the lofty ideals of peace, justice and respect for the rights of every individual. We believe this because of our conviction that it is only through the continued exercise of its moral authority that the

United Nations can effectively continue to deal in a concerted way with the global issues that are the burdensome legacy of the recent past and a daunting challenge for the twenty-first century.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Joseph E. Estrada, President of the Republic of the Philippines.

President Estrada: This meeting of Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the United Nations is a watershed in history, and I am distinctly honoured to address it. I am also pleased to congratulate our Co-Chairpersons — His Excellency Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia, and Her Excellency Ms. Tarja Halonen, President of Finland. Under their leadership, the Millennium Summit can be a defining moment in the destiny of our peoples.

We enter the new millennium with the regime of super-Power confrontation behind us. But true peace remains elusive. While the threat of world war has receded, wars and violence between States and within States continue to erupt. The new diversity of the theatres of battle has made the search for global peace much more complex than before. Terrorism recognizes no borders, and ethnic and religious conflicts are a cause of dehumanizing violence. On the other hand, the very uncertainties of our present world provide us with a unique opportunity to make a mark. We, the largest assembly ever of the world's leaders, can make our collective legacy to humanity if we lay the foundations of an international partnership that will truly advance peace in this century.

First, we should adopt preventive diplomacy as the principal global tool for peace. Preventive diplomacy must replace the use of military force. But where the use of force is unavoidable and justified, it should be guided by clearly defined international legal norms and practices. Preventive diplomacy is more cost-effective than peace operations, which are reactive in nature. We should transform the United Nations culture of reaction into a culture of pro-action.

Secondly, we should complete our work on disarmament. Progress notwithstanding, the world remains exposed to nuclear disasters, given the staggering inventories of nuclear weapons around the world.

It is startling to note that while 1.2 billion people struggle to eke out an existence on less than a dollar a day, the world spent $145 per person for military forces in 1997. What is even more distressing is that as militaries amass more deadly weapons, agents of terror can procure theirs with impunity. It is time to deal in a comprehensive manner with the issues of disarmament, small arms proliferation and transnational crime.

Thirdly, we need to pursue the reform of the United Nations with greater vigour. Its most important element is the restructuring of the Security Council, which should become truly representative of all countries. This means expansion of its membership and greater transparency in its work.

We should also provide the Organization with all the resources it needs to do its work. The stability of United Nations operations is incompatible with the uncertainties of its finances. We must all agree to meet faithfully our financial obligations to the United Nations and provide it with the financial security it deserves.

Fourthly, we should work for the universal acceptance of human rights. In the words of the Secretary-General, human rights are foreign to no culture and native to all nations. Stability should not be won by trampling on human rights. Each time an individual's rights are upheld, all of humanity gains. Each time they are violated, all of humanity suffers.

Last but not least, there can be no security amid starvation and poverty. There can be no peace without development, just as there can be no development without peace. Development is a global concern in a world that has become indivisible. Yet, while unprecedented wealth is being created in a few countries, destitution blights most other parts of the world.

The United Nations should be at the centre of efforts to establish a global economy that uplifts all peoples and nations. Our goal is not just a borderless world for the unfettered movement of capital, goods and services. It is to build a global economic regime that builds productive capacity, but not income gaps; that promotes openness instead of corruption; and that rewards enterprise, but not greed.

I take this opportunity to request the leaders of oil-exporting nations to consider rationalizing the price

of crude oil with a view to helping the economies of developing nations.

As we, the leaders of 189 nations, meet at this summit, the world's peoples will want to know what future we are shaping for them, and whether we plan to get there together or separately, as adversaries or as partners.

The five components of common resolve — preventive diplomacy, true disarmament, United Nations reform, promotion of human rights, and equitable global development — are the building blocks of our partnership agenda. We can lay the foundations today through our strong endorsement of the many initiatives the Secretary-General has placed before us. If we do that, 6 billion souls will know that we want the world to have peace, but only with freedom; that we want our peoples to savour prosperity, but only with fairness; and that we want our nations to enjoy stability, but only with openness.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Azali Assoumani, President of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros.

President Assoumani: Peace. The world needs peace, real peace — a peace that creates conditions for worldwide stability, secures prosperity for our peoples, puts an end to conflicts and to the upheavals that victimize the world's peoples, and, finally, a peace that allows for solidarity and harmony between the most privileged and the most vulnerable.

The Millennium Summit must first of all be a forum where we come together to exchange views and discuss social and economic inequalities and all of the other scourges besetting the world. This Summit has the historic responsibility of charting the course for the nascent millennium.

This millennium must be an era of solidarity, of development, of increased well-being. But what solidarity are we to build, and what relations are we to construct between North and South? What are the conditions that need to be met to bring about a culture of peace where democratic values are respected, keeping in mind that the modalities of implementation cannot be entirely identical between one country and another continent?

No solidarity, no development, no democracy, no good governance can be possible in a world where poverty, ignorance, disease and debt pose a crushing burden to some countries.

I believe that these are the fundamental challenges we are facing today, and it is for that reason that all of our citizens are looking to us here in this forum. Our decisions consequently must meet the expectations placed in us.

The United Nations must be enabled to play its full role as a catalyst in order to lay down solid foundations for a new equilibrium — a new world order based on respect between peoples, the sovereignty of States, and trust and confidence among us all.

The reforms that have been so eagerly awaited must apply to the United Nations system as a whole, and they must embrace the full spectrum of international partnership. To be credible, however, this rush of optimism must be based on the genuine will of the multilateral and bilateral partners. The reforms must go hand in hand with, and in practical terms support, States in their development efforts.

I am very pleased here to see the highest leaders of the world express their willingness to share the joys and the concerns of our peoples about today's realities. I am also pleased to see them stress the increasingly dynamic role that our Organization must play in the maintenance of peace and security. Good-neighbourly relations are better than ever among peoples in this world, driven as it is by a globalization process over which we must exert greater control and which we must make more humane.

This means that the United Nations must listen more attentively to each and every inhabitant of the global village; it must listen constantly, completely, objectively and impartially, in keeping with the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter. When it listens, it must pay heed to the imperative of participation by countries in the decision-making process involving all continents in managing world affairs.

Conflicts anywhere in the world have adverse effects that are not confined to the theatres of crisis. Their consequences are felt world wide. They place a heavy burden on the lives of every citizen. These are always human consequences because they are economic and social in nature. In Africa, the Organization of African Unity is making major efforts

to eliminate the hotbeds of tension that are scourging it. Such activities are costly but necessary. We know that they are necessary, and we know that peace is beyond price. Peace is the responsibility of States; it is our responsibility. I wish here to pay well deserved tribute to our continental organization and to its Secretary-General, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, whose entire focus is on peace in Africa.

But peace is a matter for us all, and therefore calls for local initiatives. The people of Comoros know this, and have put it into practice. The inter-Comorian dialogue, which I myself initiated, gives us hope for a peaceful solution to a crisis that has endured for some three years. I urge the entire international community to support us in this process, which will open the way to a just and equitable solution to the Comorian crisis.

I cannot fail in closing to convey warm congratulations to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, on the in-depth reforms he has undertaken to modernize the Organization and improve its performance. May peace be our objective, and may we be illuminated by its light.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Honourable Sir Mekere Morauta, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea.

Sir Mekere Morauta (Papua New Guinea): It is an honour for me to address the Millennium Summit not only on behalf of Papua New Guinea, but as a citizen of the South Pacific. Although we occupy thousands of islands remote from global centres such as this, new forces unleashed by change, interdependence and globalization remind us that no man is an island. Our future is intertwined with the rest of the world. That is the greatest challenge, and the greatest opportunity, that we have faced. The risks are enormous. Left unmanaged, they threaten our existence.

We have adapted to the first wave of modern change, colonialism and the encroachment of the developed world's ideas and practices. But that was a ripple in a pond compared with what confronts us today. One of our fathers of independence wrote that he had had to deal with 1,000 years of progress in a single lifetime. He was being conservative. In less than 200 years, Papua New Guineans have moved through the metal age and the industrial age and are now grappling with the information age.

But the cyclonic forces unleashed by the information revolution and globalization have created a tidal wave that may drown us. Small States such as Papua New Guinea are already living on the edge. To us, poverty, illiteracy and illness, conflict and crime, environmental devastation and political instability are more than concepts. They are part of our daily lives.

Can the world comprehend the reality of these simple facts and develop new structures and processes to cushion their effects? Pacific island States dependent on natural resources such as fisheries and timber require mechanisms that promote sustainable exploitation. The United Nations and the World Trade Organization (WTO) should take the lead.

Papua New Guinea remains committed to free trade and investment by 2020. So we were disappointed by the failure to start a new WTO round in Seattle. Talk of new preferential trading arrangements is also disappointing. Once some nations are treated as more equal than others, the weakest will be neglected. There is already an unacceptable wealth gap between the developed and the developing worlds. Allowance must be made for the fact that commitment by vulnerable economies to free trade and investment further exposes them.

We are also concerned at the prospect of new links between trade rights and social and environmental conditions. It is reasonable to expect a commitment to international standards, but it is not reasonable to contemplate sanctions against those that are unable to meet arbitrarily imposed additional criteria.

In the longer term, sustained development requires the Pacific islands to build robust economies. Papua New Guinea has begun to do so, increasing investment in human resources and economic infrastructure. Pacific islands need capital and technology from the developed world. But the funding guidelines and policies of multilateral development and financial institutions need to be more flexible and relevant to our requirements and our capacity.

Our needs are not confined to trade and investment. For many, our very existence as nations will be under threat unless the rising sea level is dealt with at once. Not all Governments have accepted the emissions targets of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and not all will meet the agreed targets. The United

Nations has to orchestrate further efforts with greater urgency and seriousness.

Papua New Guinea must not only adapt to rapid economic, social and environmental transformations. It faces political change to the east and the west that is just as dramatic. It is obvious that mechanisms for dealing with threats to stability are inadequate. They need to be strengthened, not only to resolve conflicts but, more important, to prevent them. Our own experience on Bougainville and our efforts to help the Solomon Islands and Fiji arrive at their own solutions to their crises show that with the cooperation of our neighbours and multinational bodies, progress can be made.

Representative bodies and individual States have too often confronted conflict after the event, commonly with destructive and expensive political and economic weapons. Moreover, it is clear that effective intervention requires an intimate understanding of a domestic society. The adoption of this approach in the South Pacific will be a starting point.

The United Nations itself needs critical self-appraisal. The lack of attention it has paid to the South-West Pacific has already been costly. In particular, the circle of the Security Council needs to be expanded to include a voice for Asia and the Pacific.

All multilateral agencies — not just the agencies of the United Nations — must rebuild their structures and processes to reflect the rapidly changing circumstances of the world, of regions and of individual nations. The price of not doing so is increased human suffering, and that is unacceptable.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Royal Highness Prince 'Ulukalala Lavaka Ata, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence of the Kingdom of Tonga.

Prince 'Ulukalala Lavaka Ata: This Summit marks an historic milestone that with the hindsight of the past affords us the opportunity to chart the future direction of our Organization by addressing the issues of concern to our Organization and peoples. Accordingly, the outcome of this Summit ought to be meeting our needs and concerns and the realization of our collective aspirations.

I congratulate the Secretary-General on the quality of his report "We the Peoples". He poses for us poignant issues deserving our earnest attention. These range from the new challenges to globalization and freedom from want and fear, to sustaining our future and renewing the United Nations. The report culminates in four significant initiatives: freedom from poverty, freedom from the scourge of war, freedom from the danger of living on a planet spoiled by human activities, and making our Organization a more effective instrument in the hands of the world's peoples. We ought to dedicate our energies, resources and policies to improving education, protecting our environment, bringing an end to poverty, promoting gender equality, increasing security and promoting good governance, human rights and the rule of law. I therefore concur with the issues raised in the report and the initiatives that the Secretary-General sets for the new century to achieve our priorities, and to this end, I see the need for an action-oriented programme.

I welcome the commitment by Member States to combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, as I do the commitment by the member States of the G-8 to cancel the debt burden of the heavily indebted poor countries. We look forward to this commitment's urgent implementation.

For the past century and a half, Tonga has invested heavily in education. While this has been a boon for us, we now find it altogether imperative that developing countries lock onto the information and communication technologies. In this respect, I welcome the Ministerial Declaration dealing with information technology of the Economic and Social Council.

While my son sees information technology as "the way to go", it is clearly the way to communicate; it is a significant means to enhance the education of all our people, and it enables them to participate in what is happening in the world. This, in part, is also the reason for our support of the SIDSnet. In particular, I welcome the offer of Japan to establish a dedicated information-technology programme in Okinawa and appreciate the resources they have earmarked for that purpose. The offer and the mechanics for its operation are deserving of our thoughtful consideration.

I am cognizant of the special needs of small island developing States, needs that ought to be resolved by implementing the Barbados Programme of Action and the outcomes of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly. Consequently, we call on the international community to make a focused commitment to meeting those needs.

I welcome the inclusion of economic vulnerability as a factor for determining the least-developed-country category, but also recognize that small island developing States are vulnerable to environmental changes. I therefore commend to the delegations the work on the environmental vulnerability index currently being carried out by the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission, and I register my appreciation for those Member States who have made available the resources for the completion of this study.

Small island developing States are sea-locked, with the inherent problems that this entails. They are acutely vulnerable to globalization, for the benefits are not yet equally shared and remain prone to the vagaries of market forces. They are ocean-bound, so the efforts to harvest the living and non-living resources of the oceans are especially important to them. Thus, the activities this year and in the immediate future of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, of the open-ended informal consultative process on oceans and the Law of the Sea, and of the International Seabed Authority are of utmost significance to small island developing States, and these activities form the basis for pursuing arrangements that return a fair share of the harvest.

The conclusion of the recent Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Review Conference seems to give hope that at some time soon nuclear disarmament might be possible; however, the shipment of nuclear waste through the waters of small island developing States needs to be regularly considered to ensure that it meets the highest international safety standards.

Tonga supports the endeavours of the Security Council and of the General Assembly to find solutions and bring enduring peace to the troubled regions of the world. In supporting the peacekeeping activities of the United Nations, we endorse the call to review the formula for assessing our contribution on the basis of a fair and equitable arrangement and on the principle of capacity to pay. We also commend to the delegations the recommendations of the Brahimi report.

Finally, I support the effort to reform the Security Council through an expansion of the number of permanent seats and non-permanent seats that would include both developed and developing countries in order to reflect today's realities and to deal with today's needs and pressing issues. Without such reform we shall be dealing with today's problems with the machinery of yesteryear.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Samdech Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Mr. Hun Sen: I have prepared a long speech for this Summit with the intention of apprising this forum of our aspirations, needs and concerns with regard to the challenges to the development of the humanity and the creation of a new world order in the age of globalization. I have asked for the distribution of the whole text for the delegations' information.

Overall, there is a common view that humanity has witnessed unimaginable, enormous and immeasurable changes and progress in the last one thousand years, in particular during the last century. Yet our achievements also mask many continuing failings and seem to give rise to more dangers for the future. Many leaders used to highlight these issues at important international forums. May I pick up for comment just a few main concepts, which I think could make a contribution to the discussions at this Millennium Summit.

First, our biggest concerns at this time are to rapidly reduce poverty, the gaps between the rich and poor and the huge economic divide that resulted from the negative impacts of globalization, which is under way and continuing to spread to regions and throughout the world. The most important challenge is to provide opportunity and create conditions for poor countries to benefit appropriately from globalization. This requires greater transfers of financial, technical and technological resources, so as to provide developing countries the opportunity to participate fully and equally in free trade by providing them with favourable access to developed markets without hidden conditionalities and domestic subsidies.

We must consider a new partnership between developed and developing countries to produce measures allowing the latter to meet effectively the challenges of globalization. At the same time, special care should be taken to design policies and establish a favourable environment to promote increased flows of investment, technologies and new knowledge to developing countries, in particular the least developed countries.

Secondly, as one of the poorest countries in the world, we are concerned about the overall decreasing trends of official development assistance. We think that in providing financing facilities, more grant funds should be provided to poor countries to boost development until they reach a minimum threshold. In this sense, we fully support the strides made to fulfil the yet to be attained internationally agreed target of 0.7 per cent of the gross national product of the developed countries for overall official development assistance as soon as possible.

Thirdly, excessive external debt is a heavy burden for poor countries and constitutes a major impediment to economic growth and investment in their human resource development. The G-8 countries have agreed to write off the heavy burden of outstanding debt of the poorest countries. This initiative has been warmly welcomed by the people of all walks of life and should be further developed by providing extra funds to help the heavily indebted poor countries and by expanding its coverage to many other poor countries.

In this regard, a number of countries, including Cambodia, have made the utmost efforts to reschedule old debts, especially those contracted in the 1970s. It is, however, regrettable that these debts were contracted during the cold war to finance the hot wars in the country and the region. Under those circumstances, most of the loans were not utilized for development. Therefore, there should be political will to write off these debts. Some countries appear to have shared this vision and have adopted this approach by not requiring payback. At the same time, we highly appreciate the generosity of donor countries and international financial institutions in granting new concessional loans to poor countries, such as Cambodia, to promote development and reduce poverty.

Fourthly, human resource development is the most important and decisive factor for development and social progress. Thus, priority should be given to the enhancement of the capacities of the least developed countries, such as Cambodia, for them to achieve the ultimate goals of social and economic development and to participate effectively and equally in regional and world affairs.

Fifthly, Cambodia agrees with the initiative to push for the creation of a new world order by establishing a new institution and putting forward a new agenda, or improving and redirecting the existing one in order to ensure that all developing countries can benefit fairly and equitably from globalization. This also includes the necessity to reform the United Nations. The reform of the Security Council should be conducted in a spirit which allows the United Nations to discharge its responsibilities in determining the destiny of the world more efficiently and with full legitimacy in the eyes of nations and peoples in all regions and at all levels of development. In this sense, Cambodia welcomes the initiative of expanding the membership of the Security Council, and expresses full support for Japan and India as candidates to occupy permanent seats on the Security Council.

I am confident that this Millennium Summit will reaffirm the commitments of all Member States in respect of the common visions for the world in the new millennium. We will all show our strong determination about this commitment through follow-up actions to be taken after the Summit.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Göran Persson, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Sweden.

Mr. Persson (Sweden): We are living at a historic juncture where global progress is a real possibility: a combined wealth never seen before; scientific advances in medicine and technology; political freedom and democratic accountability becoming the norm; an end to the belief that States have inherent enemies; access to many cultures and the inspiration of diversity; and social liberation for entire populations, and for women in particular.

There are good reasons for optimism, or even pride, but not for satisfaction. Human progress should be measured not by the achievements of the most privileged, but by the life that the most disadvantaged among us can live and enjoy.

We are painfully aware that a great part of humankind is left behind progress, each and every day having to struggle for survival and justice. Poverty is the prime challenge of this Summit and the backdrop of all international efforts.

We, the peoples, have enough knowledge and resources to act as responsible citizens of the world. Our task as leaders is to provide the political, social and economic context.

Representing one of the richer countries in the world, known for its stable democratic tradition, I have to highlight a threat to our ability to take common responsibility. In many democracies, democracy itself is questioned. Too many do not care to vote and resent political participation. Social rifts and unemployment are sowing distrust. Dark forces of racism and anti-semitism are harvesting support. Some blame unfettered globalization and come to hail insular nationalism.

This Summit can point in a more hopeful direction. It can become a reference for all those willing to act together for a better future. The future is not decreed by fate; it is people in cooperation that shape it.

The choice is ours. Some say that equality is a brake on development. But take a look around: nations that put the tools of development in the hands of all people are making more lasting progress. A well-educated population, fair distribution of income, a social safety system encouraging enterprise and mobility — those are keys to success in the new economy.

And now globalization calls for a wider social contract, making market forces serve people better.

When home again, can we match words with deeds? Systematic efforts and consistent political will are essential. Our Secretary-General is providing invaluable and persistent leadership. His Millennium Report serves as an excellent reference for checking whether our homework has been properly done.

Have we come closer to halving extreme poverty by 2015? This is a goal for which debt relief is necessary. What about providing clean drinking water and air? Or education for all children, investing as much in girls as in boys? Are we responding well enough to disastrous climate change and killer diseases like HIV/AIDS? Are we tackling organized crime and corruption? Do we respect the free will of our people, enforcing universally applicable human rights? Do we seek to encourage participation in new and old democracies alike? What about guarding conventions we have signed, disarming as we have declared, and preventing conflicts or resolving them with arguments rather than arms?

The United Nations needs the renewed strength of peoples' trust and their mandate in order to be a purposeful organization with adequate resources. Are we paying our fees before profiting? Are we honouring our commitments to aid development? And to peacekeeping, a duty well spelled out in the Brahimi report, which deserves everyone's full support.

Colleagues, the answer should be a resounding — Yes! There is no room for hesitation. Only resolute steps taken down these already agreed upon paths can restore confidence in the unity of nations to defend humanity — all of humanity.

Present and aspiring members of the reformed, enlarged Security Council that we need must live up to the trust we place in them — a restricted veto — a farewell to nuclear arms — more sophisticated sanctions.

Equality and development go hand in hand. Development will be stronger when everyone is part of it. We will all be better off if no one is left out. We have a future, we have it in common. This should be the powerful message of the Millennium Summit.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Denmark.

Mr. Rasmussen (Denmark): The United Nations is the sum of our efforts, our commitments, our contributions. The United Nations is what member countries make it. Our guiding light should be equal worth and social fairness for everybody. The Secretary-General has delivered, to my mind, the analysis of the global trends we face. The Secretary-General has made a strong case for the future of the United Nations. Global problems have to be tackled globally; therefore, we need a stronger United Nations.

Let me add that globalization cannot only be larger markets. Around the world, untold millions live in poverty, at the outskirts of change, where the future seems a dead-end street. Africa, in particular, seems locked in a vicious circle of desolation and despair. No one — no one — can justify fatalistic and cynical acceptance. We must act; and we must support Africa's renaissance. Investments, transfer of knowledge and resources are necessary for development in Africa.

We need to create a human framework for the international market forces of the economy, as we have done in our national economies. We need to put people before money and the market. When multinational

corporations make money at the expense of social progress, we have an obligation to provide the right balance. There can never be an exchange rate between money and human suffering.

At the Copenhagen Summit in 1995, poverty and social progress were at the top of the development agenda. May I underline that only if the private and the public sectors work hand-in-hand to ensure an even distribution of the benefits will we be able to realize the truly global promise of globalization.

The United Nations is what we, the leaders, want it to be. Our support forms the destiny of the United Nations. We need to do more.

I welcome the emphasis on global solidarity and social responsibility in the Secretary-General's report. The least developed countries need action on trade, debt, and aid in order to catch up. Developing countries should enjoy the advantages of international trade. Substantially improved market access for their products — and in my view, all their products — should be at the centre of the upcoming World Trade Organization (WTO) Round. Everybody should honour the demands and requirements of the International Labour Organization (ILO) concerning labour rights. We, from the richer part of the world, should assist developing countries to realize those concerns.

Debt relief has the potential to make substantial resources available for investment in poverty reduction, education, and health. Both bilaterally and multilaterally, creditors should cover their share of the costs. The long-term decline in aid needs to be reversed. Far — and I underline, far — too few countries live up to our modest commitment. If Denmark, my country, can meet and exceed the targets, others may as well. The United Nations process of financing for development offers an opportunity for renewed commitment and action. The Secretary-General can count on our support.

But I also have to underline that debt, aid or trade are not separate issues. Improving one and cutting back on another is meaningless. We can only make development sustainable if we take a coherent approach. Therefore, I urge those countries that could really make a difference — countries among the most developed and fortunate — to make an extra effort.

Following the Rio Summit in 1992, it is evident that sustainable development is the sum of many parts, including social, economic and environmental aspects.

Heads of State and Government should come together and discuss the next steps to be taken. We must promote an agenda for further cooperation with a stronger emphasis on the needs of the developing countries. We have to narrow the gap between rich and poor. This requires a major effort by the industrialized countries and, let us be honest at this Millennium Summit, too many times we have set new deadlines to reach old goals. Now is the time to act. Now is the time to let action follow words.

Effective cooperation requires solidarity and a strong, well-functioning United Nations. We want an effective United Nations capable of meeting its mandate. We need reforms and dues need to be paid by everybody. That includes both small and big nations.

The Secretary-General deserves credit for making the United Nations both leaner and more effective. His quiet revolution of 1997 must maintain momentum. Now is the time to dismantle obsolete bodies and activities. The Secretary-General can count on Denmark's support.

Reform of the Security Council is overdue as well. The number of both permanent and elected members reflects the past. It should reflect the present and the future.

The United Nations needs a sizeable and robust capacity for peace operations. It must be able to respond quickly and with credible force. The report from Ambassador Brahimi's panel provides both a strong case and frank recommendations for putting things right. The Secretary-General can count on our support. And let me add that those committed individuals who every day serve the United Nations as peacekeepers or humanitarian workers have a right, a right to safety and protection. The very recent atrocious murders in West Timor is another sad reminder of this need.

But preventive actions should always come first. Thus, I am pleased to announce, therefore, that a Danish contribution of $1 million to the Trust Fund for Preventive Action has been decided.

For almost half a century, the United Nations has remained our pre-eminent common forum for promoting peace and social progress. In this spirit I

welcome the recent landmark decision to establish a permanent forum for indigenous issues.

May I conclude by saying that it would be unfair to blame the United Nations for having failed our expectations. The fact remains that only if we, the leaders of the world, are ready, individually and collectively, to take action, only if we give the United Nations the necessary authority and adequate resources, only then can we move forward towards a better world for all.

Let us recognize today that we can do better, all of us, together.

As I said in my introduction, the United Nations is the sum of our efforts, our commitments and our contributions.

Denmark remains ready to assume her share of this responsibility and I urge all colleagues to do the same.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency, the Honourable Edward Fenech-Adami, Prime Minister of the Republic of Malta.

Mr. Fenech-Adami (Malta): Homer, the first great poet of humanity, chose the state of siege as the basic image of the human condition in his first epic, the Iliad. He later moved to another metaphor for human life in his second epic, the Odyssey, where human existence becomes a sea voyage as opposed to one marked by the stagnation and corruption which can so often produce war.

I believe that there has been a somewhat similar change in the world's self-image as indicated in the Secretary-General's report. The root of this change clearly stems from a desire to distance ourselves from the siege mentality out of which the Organization was inevitably born, and to begin the new Millennium aware that we — the whole of humanity — are embarked on the same voyage, on the same ship, and with very similar, if not precisely, the same goals.

The Secretary-General's report also embodies full recognition of the interconnectedness of the economic, environmental and ethical dimensions of global security. It focuses on current developments that, to a large extent, may be termed issues of common interest, issues that form part of the common heritage of mankind. The Summit commitment to ensure free access to information on the human genome sequence is indeed very welcome in this regard.

Globalization is clearly and rapidly emerging as an impressive force that offers potentially positive opportunities in the economies of the world. It is, however, not a panacea that can be expected to resolve all the challenges caused by underdevelopment. The benefits therefrom, if equitably distributed, could and would help the healing process of the wounds opened by the devastating consequences of underdevelopment and poverty.

Globalization has served to heighten our interdependence. It has helped us to realize that no country's problems are strictly its own. Its onset has, however, coincided with changes in our manifestations of the value of solidarity. At home many of us are reassessing the viability of our welfare systems while abroad official development assistance has fallen rather than risen.

Globalization must not be allowed to overwhelm our value of solidarity but rather allow for a new vision of this fundamental value for the new century. Solidarity must have new manifestations whereby advances in various fields, including those of science and medicine, are shared because in an interdependent world it is in our common interest that they are so shared.

We have to act swiftly to prevent a widening of the digital divide between the globalized few and the marginalized many. Failing to do so would ensure the further exacerbation of the scourge of poverty that often, indeed too often, is the root cause of most conflicts.

Equally important is the reaffirmation of our commitment to the United Nations and its Charter as the foundation of a more peaceful, prosperous and just world. Our final declaration at this Millennium Summit carries with it a commitment to make the United Nations a more effective instrument, an instrument that can promote the forces necessary for change. To ensure that the United Nations can do this, however, it has to have the necessary means at its disposal.

At present, the United Nations is effecting both internal and external reforms to ensure that it has adequate resources to meet its mandates. An area, which exacts an ever-increasing demand on resources, is the United Nations peacekeeping role. I would like

to express Malta's support for the initiatives under way in this respect. I hereby signal our intention to significantly increase our peacekeeping contribution through a voluntary move from group C to group B.

I would also like to offer Malta's commitment to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, scheduled for late next year. My Government undertakes not only to sign the declaration entitled "Tolerance and diversity — A vision for the 21st century", but also to ensure that we have a valid and relevant contribution to make at the convening of that Conference.

I would like to end by confirming Malta's commitment to the underlying principles of this Organization and our trust that this Millennium Summit will provide the impetus to ensure that the United Nations becomes a more effective instrument in the hands of we, the peoples of the United Nations, not solely in words but also in deeds.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will next hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of the Republic of India.

Mr. Vajpayee (India) (*spoke in Hindi, interpretation provided by the delegation*): It gives me great pleasure to address the Millennium Summit of the United Nations. My heartiest congratulations to both of the Co-Chairpersons.

We are gathered here to voice the aspirations and dreams of 6 billion people for the twenty-first century. We cannot have development without peace between nations and democracy within them. Peace, democracy and development secure each other.

The danger of nuclear war remains a serious threat to global peace and security in the new era whose arrival is marked by this Summit. During the last half of the century gone by, India was at the forefront of the campaign for universal nuclear disarmament, but we raised our voice to no avail. India was forced to develop these weapons in 1998 because the principal nuclear-weapon States refused to accept the almost-universal demand for disarmament. Moreover, the spread of nuclear weapons in our neighbourhood made us especially vulnerable.

India's bitter experience has taught it that it has to be strong to defend peace. Nevertheless, our policy is based on responsibility and restraint, and our commitment to universal, verifiable nuclear disarmament remains undiminished. We support the Secretary-General's proposal for an international conference to address nuclear dangers.

Of all threats to democracy, development and peace in our times, the most diabolic is international terrorism, with its links to religious extremism, drug trafficking and commerce in illicit arms. Terrorism feeds on violence against innocent people and seeks to undermine pluralistic, open societies.

Standing before this gathering of leaders who have come together to chart a new course of international cooperation in the twenty-first century, I call upon the international community to act against terrorism before it is too late. We urge the early adoption and implementation of the comprehensive convention against terrorism that will be negotiated at the session of the General Assembly that follows this Summit.

Many statesmanlike words have been delivered from this high tribune. Unfortunately, some of them are a mockery of the truth. The world must see reality as it is. The acid test of sincerity of purpose is not words but deeds. Terrorism and dialogue do not go together.

In the last half-century, the world has changed, as has the international order. But these changes are not reflected in the structure of the Security Council, which will continue to have a rather special role to play in the new century. Therefore, it is necessary that the Security Council should be more representative of the new realities. India is ready to play its role in an expanded Security Council.

This is a unique Summit, being held at a unique point in history. As the world transits from one era to another, let us pledge to bring nations together in a global family, united by peace and prosperity.

I end with an ancient Indian invocation:

May all live happily

May all enjoy good health

May all see auspiciousness

May none experience distress

May peace prevail everywhere!

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Yeshey Zimba, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Kingdom of Bhutan.

Mr. Zimba (Bhutan): It gives me great pleasure to felicitate the two leaders who have been elected to jointly and equally preside over the Millennium Summit. Their representation of separate geographic regions and cultural and economic backgrounds is an expression of our collective will to usher in an era of greater understanding, peace and cooperation in international relations.

I would also like to express my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his concise report, which is both reflective and stimulating. It fulfils the expectation of a comprehensive basis for our common endeavour to envision the future of our planet in the new century.

It is now five years since we celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, and a new millennium has begun. Yet the world is still not rid of the scourge of war, and there continues to prevail those very causes which compel sections of our society to seek change through the perpetration of violence against each other. These include insecurity, inequities, poverty and despair. But does this mean that the United Nations has failed? Certainly not.

For all its imperfections, the United Nations is an institution for which there is no alternative. It has given hope in times of instability, crisis and war. For the smaller and more vulnerable nations, the world body has served to safeguard sovereignty and freedom. Above all, the United Nations today is vital to the promotion and conduct of international relations and behaviour. The wisdom of committing ourselves to the strengthening of our Organization must therefore be upheld.

Against this backdrop, I would urge that the time has come to do more than pay lip service to the reform and expansion of the Security Council. Let us work to make it happen. Let us ensure that, among other things, the United Nations is on firm financial footing and that there is equitable geographic representation of permanent members in the Council.

Globalization is a revolution that is all-embracing and irreversible. We in Bhutan accept it as a natural outcome of the continuing evolution of human society, accelerated by the miracles of technology. We believe that, just as all human institutions and cultural expressions are of our own making, so must the direction, pace and impact of globalization be guided to ensure that it serves to enhance our greater common interests and values.

The alleviation of material poverty and spiritual hunger, which undermine human dignity and the value of human life, remains a great challenge for all our Governments. We see people-centred, holistic development as an effective way to overcome the problem. In this context, Bhutan has evolved a philosophy and concept of development aimed at promoting "gross national happiness" — not just simply gross national product. Besides socio-economic development under conditions of equity and sustainability, it prescribes environmental conservation, the promotion of basic human values and good governance. It requires that, in the process of promoting development and ensuring freedom from the uncertainty of survival and want of basic needs, humanity must not lose its soul.

When we speak about the eradication of poverty, peacekeeping, or the promotion of socio-economic development, finance is a constraining factor, not because of an absolute lack of it, but for want of a greater political will to share available resources. In this regard, we must not be oblivious to the diminishing role and capacity of the United Nations, due mainly to lack of support and funds. My delegation would like to take this opportunity to thank and commend the few developed countries that have met or surpassed the internationally agreed official development assistance annual disbursement target of 0.7 per cent of gross domestic product, and we appeal to others to do the same.

Peace and security are prerequisites for human creativity and productivity. These are the foundations for social and economic advancement. This Summit is historic not only in the context of the new millennium but because of the affirmation of the relevance and importance of this world body by the largest-ever number of heads of State or Government in its history. This, then, is the moment to rededicate and commit our countries and peoples to the high aims and ideals of the United Nations. Let this be the occasion from which will rise a more purposeful, strong and effective United Nations — a United Nations that will succeed in

creating the preconditions for human growth and happiness.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Julio César Franco, Vice-President of the Republic of Paraguay.

Mr. Franco (Paraguay): It is a great pleasure for me — as well as for my country, Paraguay — to be here in this Hall and to participate in this lofty forum of heads of State and representatives, who are gathered here with the goal of establishing a link between policy-making and deliberation.

The beginning of this millennium is more than just a date in history. It is providing us with the opportunity to rethink our policies and to anticipate the changes our countries will have to make in order to achieve a level of sustainable development that respects human dignity and the need to preserve the ecosystem.

The recognition of the need for reform and to effect change, both domestically and internationally, is a sign of the times. The complexity of our global world is such that nothing is certain and nothing is stable. Global society requires us to adopt a development model in our countries that not only takes account of our comparative advantages but also attaches importance to the development of competitive advantages.

Developing countries such as mine, with their weak infrastructures, must be prepared to meet the challenges of a global society that is characterized by a political and military hierarchy, social stratification and asymmetrical interdependence.

Without discounting the external factors that negatively affect our development opportunities, I would urge that countries with a more limited capacity, such as mine, elaborate a development strategy that enhances the capacity of our domestic institutions.

We need to focus on our endogenous processes and enhance their efficiency and effectiveness. Our challenge is to create institutional models and adopt political management styles that will enable us, from a comprehensive development perspective, to promote public policies that give priority to economic growth, the equitable distribution of wealth, environmental preservation and the achievement of gender equality.

We must reaffirm our commitment to the human development paradigm. This will require us to rethink and re-evaluate the mechanisms and courses of action necessary for us to set up institutional arrangements that promote social participation, give greater responsibility to civil society and establish machinery that will enable us to transform, in an equitable manner, our individual and collective efforts into social progress.

We must focus with all our will on preparing a model for society in which political stability and economic growth leave no room for inequality and social exclusion. The immediate target of our collective effort must be on meeting social demands. Poverty and marginalization violate the principles of the ethic of solidarity, obstruct opportunities for democratic development and stifle the will and the progressive and entrepreneurial spirit of our societies. The breakdown of society internalizes the sense of irrelevance, the anomy, of national communities and weakens individual commitment to the common, collective future. Societies that lose their sense of identity are less able to rise to the challenge of global capitalism.

In that context, I take this opportunity to reiterate Paraguay's position with regard to the entry of the Republic of China on Taiwan as a full Member in the United Nations. Paraguay requests once again that this democratic and progressive country be made part of the United Nations system.

Similarly, we believe that the re-establishment of dialogue between the United Kingdom and the Argentine Republic on the Malvinas Islands is essential to finding a peaceful and lawful solution to that problem.

Finally, I wish to refer once more to the dawn of the new millennium. At the start of any new era, optimism struggles with pessimism. There are reasons for skepticism and justification for the disillusionment of those who claim there is no hope. We believe that there is a need to enhance the quality of our policy-making and we need to consider that this involves more than a mere struggle for power. It requires us to focus on creating material and moral conditions that are not hostile to the full exercise of human rights in this world.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by Her Excellency Mrs. Lydie

Poiter, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg.

Mrs. Poiter (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): The gathering in New York of the leaders of the peoples of our planet is a powerful gesture, because it broadcasts the image of a common will, an affirmation of unity and the interdependence of our nations.

This meeting is important. We need landmarks to appreciate what unites us and to measure the distances that separate us. If they can be measured, they become less daunting.

Kofi Annan spoke to us of the potential of freedom in the face of fear, hunger, disease and ignorance. Will the wise man be heard? Societies long ago defined the instrument that provides a lasting hold over the happiness that wisdom brings: these are rights and their issue, the law — not the law of the strongest, but that which defines and accepts partners equal in rights. International legality, on which the actions of international society are based, is certainly not an immutable principle. International society, like the societies of different States, is constantly evolving. It is up to us to ensure that our actions and the instruments available to us to implement them are adequately adapted.

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, the aspiration to peace and prosperity remains at the heart of our commitment, while many sources of tension persist throughout the world. In recent decades, our Organization has developed its activities to control these crises, either by deploying United Nations peacekeeping operations or by launching international crisis-management actions in cooperation with regional organizations. The results of these efforts have been mixed and should be critically assessed with a view to improving their effectiveness in the future. The role of the United Nations, however, cannot be limited to that of an international fire brigade.

With the Brahimi report, our Organization has undertaken a global exercise of reflection on the way in which it addresses conflict and we must develop a global international crisis-management strategy on the basis of this reflection. We will need greater imagination and perseverance and to devote our joint efforts to improving conflict prevention.

One of the best ways of achieving this objective in the years to come will be to pursue our action on behalf of balanced and sustainable development, which reduces disparities between the various continents and which will be reflected in an effective improvement of the living standards of the populations concerned. In this context, the fight against poverty is one of the central axes of international action. I wish to inform the Assembly that, beginning this year, my country will devote 0.7 per cent of its gross national product to official development assistance programmes.

The ongoing process of the globalization of the economy should offer new opportunities to working and thinking people and to entrepreneurial freedom in the context of systems that are better balanced and endowed with effective self-monitoring mechanisms. Globalization will be a success only if the international community can develop the regulatory framework necessary to give countries and social groups a more harmonious and equitable access to the incredible opportunities offered by communication technologies.

The promotion of the values of peace, justice and solidarity is another essential pillar of United Nations action. In the course of recent years, our Organization has striven to codify through international conventions the principal rights and duties that permit the development of democratic and tolerant societies which accept differences and respect the individual.

Indeed, the tragedies that continue to afflict far too many regions of our planet result not from the differences between individuals and peoples, but from the lack of respect of some for others. Contempt and denial of equality are incompatible with the building of a stable society, be it at the national or the international level.

Without a deep-rooted sense of equality, how can we imagine authentic, sincere and staunch harmony between groups and peoples, regions and countries, nations and States? Without a confidence rooted in the most diverse cultures, languages and traditions, how can we bring ourselves to accept an outstretched hand? How can we act without trust, how can we share the burden of decision-making without mutual recognition?

It will be up to the instrument of the United Nations system — which is incomparable because universal — to endow itself with the means to ensure that these rights and values are effectively implemented and benefit those for whom they are destined. In order to discharge better in the future the important tasks that

have been assigned to it, the United Nations will have to pursue and intensify the internal reform that has been begun and overhaul relations between its various organs: the General Assembly, where we all meet together; the Security Council, which should be enlarged in order to be more representative; and the Economic and Social Council, which should be revitalized.

But the responsibility for this necessary effort of adaptation cannot be limited to the initiative of our Secretary-General and to the work and commitment of our representatives here in New York. Such a commitment must necessarily concentrate the determination of Governments and will also require the cooperation and assistance of civil society, whose contribution is invaluable.

In conclusion, allow me to express the hope that the Millennium Summit will be an important stage along the road to the achievement of our common objective of an international society that is more just, more equitable and more tolerant, and has greater solidarity, for the common good of the peoples of the world.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Eriya Kategaya, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uganda.

Mr. Kategaya (Uganda): This is a historic moment ripe with opportunities and challenges. The last hundred years have seen tremendous developments in science and technology, and man has made significant progress. Yet at the same time the majority of humankind still does not enjoy the fruits of that progress, for a number of reasons, one being the lack of peace and another poverty.

We, the leaders gathered here, have an obligation to ensure that a conducive environment for peace is created and sustained. We must therefore deal seriously with the root causes of conflict and act to prevent those causes by promoting good governance and accessibility of opportunities for every citizen.

The international community must remember that the most horrendous violations of human rights in this century, the Holocaust against the Jews and the genocide in Rwanda and Kosovo, were the creation of a leadership that instigated ethnic hatred and religious intolerance. We must therefore collectively develop zero tolerance for such leadership. In the words behind the United Nations Charter "Never again" must be "Never again".

Poverty eradication is yet another challenge that we face. The majority of people living in poverty are in developing countries. The celebrated globalization presents many opportunities, but has always presented unfair terms of trade. In our view, globalization has always existed. The era of the slave trade, when human beings were exchanged for trinkets and whisky, was a form of globalization, but an unfair one. It was an exchange of value for no value. What is needed, therefore, are fair terms of trade.

However, fair terms of trade are not enough. For us, as developing countries, the era of being mere producers of raw materials must come to an end. We must focus on adding value to all goods before putting them on the market. This, in our view, is the only way everybody can benefit from globalization and, in the long run, eradicate poverty. We must work to ensure that nobody continues to live in abject poverty. Globalization should not leave any country or anybody behind.

With respect to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, it is our experience that this is a multisectoral problem that thrives best in poverty. It is therefore not surprising that the most alarming rates of HIV/AIDS infection are in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. Poor diet and poor medical services or a lack of them, contribute to making the situation worse. Even where medical facilities are available, the cost of drugs is so prohibitive that only a few privileged people can afford treatment. There is therefore a need for a deliberate effort to make these drugs affordable. This is our moral obligation.

Although, we would not like to advocate debt forgiveness per se, the debt burden is a real problem, because the resources spent on repaying the debts should be used for investing in poverty eradication programmes, education and health. We also need to mobilize new and additional resources to address such issues as appropriate technological transfers, increasing agricultural productivity and, most urgently, the industrialization of developing countries and their transformation from largely peasant societies into middle-class societies.

While welcoming the recent initiative by the G-7 to significantly reduce the debt burden of highly

indebted countries, the initiative itself is not a panacea for the problems of development. The relief will provide the poor countries with the fiscal resources to increase spending on poverty eradication programmes, but the effective exit from debt problems will require rich countries to open up their markets to exports from poor countries.

In the medium- and long-run, what will get poor countries out of the aid/poverty trap is investment and trade. The private sectors of developing countries must be promoted and strengthened. Therefore, developed countries must fully open their markets to us. However, highly indebted poor countries should increase their production capacity so that once there is market access there are goods available for supply. It goes without saying that without the availability of goods, trade is impossible. Countries cannot trade what they do not produce.

The lesson to be learned from our experience in Uganda is that debt relief is necessary to free up resources for investment and poverty eradication. But, if it is to be effective in improving economic and social conditions in the poorest countries, it must be accompanied by sound domestic economic and budgetary policies.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Surin Pitsuwan, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Thailand.

Mr. Pitsuwan (Thailand): Allow me first to commend the far-sighted initiative of the Secretary-General in organizing this historic Millennium Summit and producing a most insightful report (A/54/2000) which serves as an excellent basis for our current deliberations. On the whole, Thailand is supportive of the principles and recommendations laid out in the Secretary-General's timely report, "We the peoples ...", particularly his emphasis on human-centred development. The report rightly identifies the new challenges confronting us all as we enter the new century.

In Thailand's view, such challenges are of far-reaching magnitude and scope, ranging from a complex phenomenon such as globalization all the way to the more immediate problem of high energy and oil prices on the present world market. We in Thailand are deeply concerned about the negative repercussions of high oil prices on the global economy. It is our earnest hope that the international community will be able to find a mutually satisfactory resolution to this problem before it gets out of hand and leads to another worldwide economic crisis.

As we prepare to face the intricate challenges of the twenty-first century, we must all do our part to make this a better world in which to live. As far as Thailand is concerned, we have striven to play a constructive role and to make a meaningful contribution to global peace and prosperity.

In the international arena, Thailand has sought to play a proactive role in achieving a more just and equitable global order. In this quest, our Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Commerce, Mr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, will be assuming the post of Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in September 2002. We also helped foster the "Spirit of Bangkok" during the successful tenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) earlier this year in our common effort to forge better understanding and help bridge the dangerous gap between the developed and developing countries.

Along the same lines, Thailand also supports the convening of a high-level international intergovernmental event on financing for development at the highest level possible next year, in the belief that such a conference would help address the national, international and systemic issues relating to financing for development in a holistic manner.

In the political sphere, Thailand has strongly supported and participated in United Nations peacekeeping operations in virtually all regions of the world. We are honoured that a Thai military officer, Lieutenant-General Boonsrang Niumpradit, has been appointed Force Commander of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor.

Thailand also welcomes the recent release of the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, headed by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi. We look forward to the implementation of many of the practical recommendations proposed by the Panel with a view to strengthening the capacity of the United Nations to conduct efficient peacekeeping operations and mount a quick response to potential threats to international security.

As the primary organ responsible for maintaining international peace and stability, the Security Council

must also be reformed to enable it to carry out its tasks more effectively. In line with the increased membership of, and mounting challenges to, this world Organization over the decades, Thailand supports the expansion of Security Council membership in both permanent and non-permanent seats, based on the principle of equitable geographical representation, efficiency and readiness to share the responsibilities.

In closing, I would like to reiterate Thailand's support for the Secretary-General's millennium report and our pledge to work with the international community in realizing the practical recommendations contained in it. It is our earnest hope that the outcome of the deliberations at this historic Millennium Summit will help chart a new course for closer partnership among all nations, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society, parliaments and private corporations in the quest for a better and brighter future for all of us and for posterity.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Abdurrahman Shalghem, Secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

Mr. Shalghem (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: As we meet at this historic Summit in an attempt to formulate an appropriate vision for the future of humanity in the next millennium, we express the hope that the past century — with all of its scientific achievement and progress in all fields, as well as the negative impact it has had on peoples and on the environment — will provide us with guidelines to shape our aspirations and our dreams of a world that is free from oppression, exploitation, the destruction of the planet and nature, the marginalization of millions of people and disrespect for human rights.

We believe that the foundation of the world of the new millennium must be the achievement of equality for all human beings, the prevention of all forms of discrimination and the consecration of the human being as the most valuable and precious creature on earth. On this basis, greater attention must be accorded to children's health and education. Children must be provided with circumstances that allow them to grow up to be healthy, creative, free and strong human beings. This desirable state of affairs will require laws that safeguard the rights of mothers and their children and the right of every human being to his or her own home and to be a partner in shaping his or her own life.

In order to prevent the return of colonialism, the colonizing States should compensate the peoples they colonized for the persecution inflicted on them, the destruction caused to their environment and the plundering of their resources and cultural properties.

The objective behind the establishment of the International Criminal Court is the punishment of the perpetrators of the most serious crimes against humanity and against international security. However, the Rome Statute is designed to try only the weak. Such a Statute cannot be accepted, and neither can it be signed or ratified unless it is modified in a manner that guarantees that justice is meted out to all those who perpetrate acts of aggression, drug smugglers and their trade partners, those responsible for mass killings of innocent people, and those who commit aggression against international forces.

The Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction deals only with simple weapons of limited effect. As a third-world people, unable to defend our borders and our lands against powerful nations that possess aircraft carriers and aircraft that refuel during flights, we believe that humanity should be more preoccupied with the destruction of nuclear, chemical, biological and ballistic weapons rather than with mines, which are a simple type of weapon.

Terrorism has taken on many forms. Internationally imposed sanctions and external debt are forms of terrorism. The use and the threat of use of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction all constitute forms of terrorism, as do the conditions imposed by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization. Therefore, in order for the international community to combat terrorism, we should first and foremost define it and its causes as well as all acts of violence.

In this respect, it is imperative that the following principles be upheld.

First, a distinction must be made between the various forms of terrorism and peoples' struggle for freedom, as well as the struggle waged by persecuted

groups against their oppressors, which is seen by some as terrorism.

Secondly, all States must undertake to accept the repatriation of all persons living in exile and all refugees and to guarantee their safety and assist them in resettling.

Thirdly, compensation must be provided for peoples, as well as individuals and their families, that fall victim to terrorism and violence.

Fourthly, all abducted persons and detainees must be released, and all persons being sought by the international police must be surrendered.

Mr. Tuomioja (Finland) took the Chair.

Without agreement on all such issues, it is certain that the signing or ratification of any international convention or agreement on international terrorism will be to no avail.

The creation of a world in which prosperity prevails requires commitment to the implementation of international agreements on maternal and child care and protection. And a world free from aggression and hostilities requires the prohibition of all manifestations of violence. Furthermore, in order to achieve a world free from epidemics and disease, we need to fight vigorously against dangerous diseases such as cancer, AIDS, poliomyelitis and malaria. There must also be an effort to combat the use of "white poisons" — cocaine and heroin — and the treatment of addicts. Moreover, in order to protect our planet from the dangers that threaten it, we should work to stop desertification and to eradicate crop pests. We should also strive to establish low-cost water desalination systems. Here, we propose the creation of a United Nations fund to which all countries would contribute.

Meeting Africa's special needs means refraining from exploiting its resources, plundering its riches and squandering its wealth. It also requires non-interference in its internal affairs, and ceasing to impose on the African continent concepts that are alien to its culture and traditions. Furthermore, States which colonized Africa and enslaved its peoples must apologize to the continent and pay full compensation for the damages inflicted by colonialism.

We feel that the United Nations cannot play an effective role in meeting the challenges posed by international problems unless it undergoes a radical reform compatible with its Charter. For this reason, the resolutions of the General Assembly must be binding. The Assembly must also exercise control over all other United Nations organs, including the Security Council, which must be accountable to the Assembly. The Council should act as an executive tool for the implementation of General Assembly resolutions. The Assembly should approve the resolutions adopted by the Security Council. The right of veto should also be subject to review in a manner that leads either to its abolition or to its possession by the general membership of the Council.

The United Nations should establish subcommittees covering most parts of the world and responsible for the inspection, implementation and follow-up of United Nations programmes.

That is our vision of how the world should look in the third millennium. We need a world in which peace and security have been achieved, in which stability and prosperity have been enhanced, in which disease, ignorance and poverty have been eradicated, and, first and foremost, in which the will of all peoples is respected.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Muratbek Imanaliev, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan.

Mr. Imanaliev (Kyrgyzstan) (*spoke in Russian*): We had been looking forward to the opening of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly: the Millennium Assembly. It was expected that the discussions would be about the future of mankind — and today's discussions are indeed about the future, which depends on us. It is highly desirable that long-term positive results and favourable consequences for all peoples should flow from the ideas and recommendations of this global forum.

The people of Kyrgyzstan are impressed by the concepts and the concrete proposals set out by the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, in his report entitled "We, the peoples: the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century" (A/54/2000). We also agree with his point that the Millennium Summit gives world leaders an unprecedented opportunity to rebuild the United Nations in keeping with the tasks of the twenty-first century.

The United Nations has always been a unique global forum. In keeping with its universal character and with historic agreements, it needs to broaden its mandate to solve vital issues of the maintenance of international peace and security, the promotion and stimulation of development and the mobilization of the efforts that the international community must carry out to combat future challenges and threats.

The globalization process has both positive and negative features. With any new system, anxieties are bound to arise, particularly among those who feel oppressed by the process, and especially if we commit errors and permit misunderstandings to occur. The main role in preventing that anxiety should lie with the United Nations.

Those are some of the reasons why the Kyrgyz Republic favours increasing the overall effectiveness of the United Nations, which should be a results-oriented organization. We envision a United Nations with better management and a well ordered structure, an organization better prepared to cope with humanitarian and political crises. We also understand the need for overall, effective reform of the United Nations, including the expansion of the Security Council in both its categories, and we support such reform. Reform should be solidly grounded in respect for all United Nations bodies that have already proven their endurance.

The aim of Kyrgyzstan's participation in world affairs is safe and friendly coexistence with all countries. This proceeds from the idea of the interdependence of the world, and mutually beneficial activities, on an equal footing, on the part of all countries and peoples. That is the basis for President Askar Arkaev's concept of "Silk Road diplomacy". Restoring the Silk Road is the central idea of a wide range of active historical processes based on a universal and creative dynamic that is founded on the needs of mankind. The realization of that concept will be impossible without the strengthening of friendly, trusting, fruitful relationships among all States, not only those along the great Silk Road. This concept can be realized only on the basis of universal access to all the achievements of human civilization. Our vision of the restoration of the Silk Road involves a new culture of peace and a new culture of human existence in a clean environment free from suffering, hunger, poverty and illiteracy.

As it crosses the threshold of the third millennium, Kyrgyzstan, like other Central Asian States, has been facing various threats, such as international terrorism and religious extremism. Terrorism is most often accompanied by illegal trafficking in weapons and in drugs. These factors pose a genuine, grave threat to stability and security — and not only in our region. We in Kyrgyzstan are convinced that no individual country can cope on its own with these evils. Collective measures are necessary to overcome these problems. Terrorism has ceased to be the problem of any one State but rather represents a threat to the entire world community.

That is why the efforts of our countries should be supported by the international community, as the leaders of Central Asian countries have repeatedly declared. And the role of the United Nations and the Security Council in this process is especially important. First and foremost, my country will actively support the creation of an international system of measures for controlling terrorism and other forms of extremism.

I would like to highlight the situation in Afghanistan. The people of that country continue to bear many burdens, and to be the victims of violence and death. Moreover, that country has become a source of terrorism, drug trafficking and myriad other problems. Kyrgyzstan supports efforts undertaken by the United Nations, and also welcomes other useful initiatives. We express the hope that effective measures will be undertaken radically to improve conditions in Afghanistan. For our part, we sincerely wish to promote the prompt establishment of peace in Afghanistan and stability in the region as a whole. Accordingly, the Kyrgyz Republic reaffirms its readiness to host a peace conference on Afghanistan under United Nations auspices.

We all agree that dialogue and a desire to solve jointly all our common issues is far better than conflict and war. That is an absolute truth. During the summit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) held at Istanbul in November 1999, the President of Kyrgyzstan put forward the idea of organizing a forum-dialogue between the OSCE and the Organization of the Islamic Conference on matters of security, peace and sustainable development. Kyrgyzstan considers that such a forum-dialogue could promote the development of mechanisms for jointly confronting the threats and challenges that the States of

an extensive region now face. The forum-dialogue would strengthen mutual understanding and respect among peoples, and would continue the fruitful dialogue among civilizations.

The Kyrgyz Republic believes that the Millennium Summit represents a unique opportunity not only to discuss the problems facing us but also to adopt the correct programme of action. That is how we view the draft Millennium Declaration of the Summit. One can only understand a journey by embarking on it.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Honourable Lakshman Kadirgamar, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Special Envoy of the President of Sri Lanka.

Mr. Kadirgamar: I have the honour to deliver, on behalf of the President of Sri Lanka, Her Excellency Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, the following message to the Millennium Summit:

> "Forty four years ago, when the United Nations was still young and full of hope, a former Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, my late father, S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, addressing the General Assembly from this very podium said:
>
> > 'the prevention of war is a necessary factor for peace, but peace is something much more positive than that. In its true sense it means human understanding, human friendship and cooperation out of which, indeed, peace in its true form alone can rise. The United Nations is the one machine available to mankind today through which it can express this unconquerable spirit of man in his efforts to achieve that peace, friendship and collaboration'.
>
> "As the new millennium opens I ask myself — is the world a better place to live in today than it was 40 years ago? In some ways yes, in other ways no. Stark contrasts still abound. The unconquerable spirit of man remains undimmed. He has dived to the bottom of the oceans; he and his machines have soared to the highest heavens. Medical and surgical miracles have prolonged his life. Technological marvels in the fields of information and communication continue to dazzle us. But while undreamed of wealth and affluence have been generated in some quarters of the globe, in others mankind has plunged deeper into the abyss of poverty, hunger, disease and squalor. These problems remain to be addressed — and addressed urgently. We have been spared the horrors of another global war — an achievement for which the United Nations deserves great credit — but there is turmoil all around us. New threats have arisen to the stability and security of States. That is the problem I wish to address today.
>
> "Peace among all States and peace among all peoples within States so that all, and not only some, may in safety, without fear, in dignity, without humiliation, in good health, and in material and spiritual well-being enjoy the wonders of life on this miracle we call the planet Earth — such is my dream, such is my hope for the future at this Millennium Summit.
>
> "However, how do we all — all States and all peoples within States — go from dream to reality? Of the problems that could then arise — the problems of limited resources, competing priorities, cost-effective procedures, catastrophic disruptions — I shall not speak today. But I would like to speak today on the fundamentals of the United Nations structure — the fundamentals that we must protect and preserve for the future.
>
> "It is here in the General Assembly that representatives of Governments, of peoples, of States gather in solemn assembly, governed by a Charter that assures States of their sovereign equality, their political independence, their territorial integrity. States, peoples, Governments, representatives, the Charter of the United Nations — these are the fundamentals of the United Nations.
>
> "This Organization, essential and pragmatic but still very fragile, reflects those fundamentals in its origins and composition, in its structure and capacities, and in its limitations. And always at the core, we find the entity we know as the State. That is as it should be. States are the principal organizational entities into which the peoples of this planet have gathered, and the inter-States system is the principal organizational edifice of the international community. If States weaken, so

will this Organization. If States are diminished, so will this Organization be diminished; for the entity we know as the State, there is no substitute.

"Let us remember that States are corporate entities of enormous complexity, differing entirely from the corporate entities of the private sector that are usually of single or limited purpose, and often authoritarian in management styles. If the management of a developed State with more than adequate resources can be a complex undertaking, how much more complex would be the management of a multi-ethnic, multi-religious, post-colonial, developing State, where the legacies of centuries of a colonial past take more than one generation to erase?

"Where there is the use of armed force against a State, as in my country, the complexities within a State compound themselves many times over. My country, Sri Lanka, has had for many years an armed conflict within its territory that has complicated the lives of the entire population of the country. It is a conflict of an extraordinary nature. A very small group, schooled in and totally devoted to violence, standing outside the processes of peaceful society and participatory governance, achieving through the practice of systematic terror a national and international notoriety, rejecting all overtures for settlement of differences through dialogue, sustained by massive funding and other support from expatriates settled in countries of goodwill and open heart, continues to battle the State.

"This phenomenon is not indigenous to Sri Lanka alone. The Secretary-General in his report to the General Assembly in 1997 that contained his proposals for United Nations reform referred to the powerful threats to government authority and civil society from networks of crime, narcotics, money-laundering and terrorism.

"When the security and integrity of one State is threatened by an armed group within it, it surely behoves all other States to deny that armed group any encouragement, succour or safe haven. That is my plea today on behalf of Sri Lanka.

"A democratic State — because of its openness, its laws, traditions and practices, its commitment to tolerance and dissent — is especially vulnerable to the deployment of force against it by any group within its boundaries. An internal armed challenge to any State anywhere is a challenge to all States everywhere. Unless all States, and democratic States in particular, agree to come to the aid of a State thus in peril, democracy itself will be imperilled everywhere. Democracy will not survive."

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Séverin Ntahomvukiye, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Burundi.

Mr. Ntahomvukiye (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): It is a privilege for me to take the floor at this solemn Millennium Summit, on behalf of the people and the Government of Burundi and the delegation accompanying me, and on my own behalf.

Since our allotted time is short, I wish to limit myself to informing the General Assembly on the development of the situation in my country, which, as is known, has been experiencing the horrors of civil war for seven years. Consideration of the other international issues is developed in the text of my statement, which will be distributed.

Two years ago, from this same rostrum, the President of the Republic of Burundi, Mr. Pierre Buyoya, spoke on the comprehensive and inclusive peace process that had just been launched. Everyone, inside and outside the country, was skeptical about the positive outcome of this difficult enterprise.

Where are we today? The Burundian people are in the process of turning a page in their history. The agreement on peace and national reconciliation was signed on 28 August in Arusha, Tanzania, before the eyes of the entire world, which hailed the occasion. That was a qualitative leap forward towards a better future for the Burundian people.

The Government pays a tribute to the tireless efforts of the Burundian negotiators of all leanings. It urges them to permanently bury the hatchet of war, to consolidate the gains of national unity and to lead the people on the path of development.

The Government of Burundi also expresses its great appreciation to the entire international community, and to the countries of the region in particular, for the assistance, advice and facilitation provided throughout this long and painful struggle for peace.

A special tribute goes to Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, the engineer and catalyst of the peace process at its outset, as well as to Nobel Peace Prize winner President Nelson Mandela, whose skill, matchless mediation and unequalled determination succeeded in wearing down mistrust. He succeeded, and in fact it is the people of Burundi as a whole who won.

Everything has not yet been resolved. Major challenges remain to be met. Aside from some reservations expressed by certain parties, which have begun to be addressed, the greatest remaining challenge is ending the war, without which the implementation of the agreement is practically impossible. The meeting between the Government army and the armed groups, to be held on 20 September at Nairobi, Kenya, will be critical in this regard. Subsequently, the firm commitment of all parties will be necessary to implement the accord strictly in the nation's general interest.

Burundi is drained, destroyed and ruined after seven years of war, three years of embargo and the freezing of international assistance. The unavoidable prerequisite for renewing cooperation has always been the signature of the peace accord. This has been done. We launch a heartfelt appeal to all bilateral and multilateral partners to renew unreservedly their solidarity with Burundi.

It is our hope to attain a fair and sustainable peace. In that way, Burundi will be able to make its modest contribution to the realization of this Organization's primary objective: the maintenance of international peace and security.

I will end here. As I stated earlier, the rest of my statement addresses Burundi's view on the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century, particularly in connection with changing the Security Council through the equitable representation of all regions of the planet. It also addresses the struggle against poverty and international peace and security.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. João Bernardo de Miranda, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Angola.

Mr. Miranda (Angola) (*spoke in Portuguese, English text furnished by the delegation*): This Summit provides us with an opportunity to address in-depth issues that are critical for the development and the well-being of all peoples of the world. Poverty and problems associated with it, such as unemployment, underemployment and lack of access to basic education, health and clean water, continue to increase in many countries.

Armed conflicts and local wars caused by social and political factors persist and endanger the lives of millions of people, widening the gap between rich and poor countries. They are among the main barriers to development. Over the last few years, economic, scientific and technological advances, unprecedented in the history of mankind, have been made. But they have benefited only a fifth of the world's population. This small percentage controls 86 per cent of the world's production, 82 per cent of export markets, 68 per cent of foreign direct investment and 74 per cent of all telephone lines on the planet.

Far from reducing poverty, initiatives in developing countries to counter this income concentration trend through structural adjustment programmes have ended up increasing inequalities because they promote only growth and not human development. This is happening primarily in African countries, where almost half the population survives on less than $2 a day.

Although globalization has had a major impact on international relations, affecting all areas of human life, and especially the development process in poor countries, these nations still lack the capacity to face the challenges engendered by this process and are unable to take advantage of the opportunities being created or to minimize its unfavourable aspects.

In fact, what we are witnessing is the imposition of equal rules for countries at different stages of development, thus limiting competitiveness for the weak. To benefit all, a new, fair and more sustainable economic order is necessary, as well as a change in the present international financial order to make it capable of reducing the gap between rich and poor.

In this process of increasing inequality, we also need to take into account the external debt. Far-reaching programmes intended to solve economic problems in developing countries have only increased poverty, misery and marginalization, further deepening the vicious cycle of debt, poverty and under-development.

In a global context, Africa is the poorest of all continents. It should, therefore, receive global assistance, including debt re-scheduling, and even debt relief or forgiveness. Africa's development should be financed by a global assistance fund that would link economic reform to poverty eradication.

Many previous speakers have stressed the need to reform our Organization so that it can meet the present challenges of today's world. Angola fully concurs. Especially important are current proposals for greater democratization and strengthening of the United Nations so that it can achieve its unique mission of promoting a more dignified, prosperous and peaceful world, preserving and reinforcing the legitimate interests of all.

Angola reiterates its firm support for the African common position on equitable representation in and restructuring of the Security Council, designed to secure two permanent and two non-permanent seats for Africa on an enlarged Security Council.

In conclusion, allow me to reaffirm Angola's determination to contribute to a more secure and prosperous world for all in this third millennium.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will next hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Sélim Tadmoury, Chairman of the delegation of Lebanon.

Mr. Tadmoury (Lebanon): Lebanon is particularly proud to participate in this historically significant Summit, especially after the recent liberation of its southern part, thanks to the steadfastness and the resistance of the Lebanese people and to the support of the international community. The Israeli occupation, which lasted for more than 22 years, witnessed the loss of thousands of innocent civilian lives and inflicted extensive damage on the country's most vital infrastructures. Insidiously, it paralyzed Lebanon's economy on the whole, impeded its socio-economic development and inhibited its historic contribution to human civilization, a contribution which Lebanon had been extending for 5,000 years.

Lebanon considers the liberation of its territory from the Israeli occupation an incomplete step. It must be followed by a solution to the question of the Palestinian refugees, particularly those whom Lebanon has been hosting on its soil for more than 50 years. Our ultimate objective is to reach a just, comprehensive and lasting peace, based on the Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights up to the line of 4 June 1967, according to resolutions of international legitimacy and to the terms of reference of the 1991 Madrid Conference.

Lebanon also calls upon the international community to enable the Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable rights and, above all, the right to self-determination and to establish their independent State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital.

While we gather today to reaffirm our belief in the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, Lebanon confirms the objective correlation between the establishment of international peace and security and the development process and peace-building as well. It is so obvious that armed conflicts have prevented and continue to prevent countries and people from involving their human and economic resources in the process of development and peace-building. Enhancing the United Nations mechanisms of peacemaking and promoting proper conditions for sustainable development require the reform of the most important bodies of our Organization — namely, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. By doing so, the United Nations system can contribute to the improvement of the living conditions in developing countries. The reform of the Security Council, extensively debated among Member States, should be based on transparency, rationalization of working methods and equitable representation in light of the political, demographic and economic development that has occurred since the end of the Second World War, although, in order to achieve this goal, the international community is invited to adopt a courageous action in this direction.

We equally view the necessity to reform the Economic and Social Council by re-evaluating and revising its role and its mandate in a manner that both the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council could function in a harmonious system responding effectively to the needs of our century. No one today can separate our right to enjoy peace and security from our right to achieve development.

The long march of the United Nations has, particularly during the last two decades, witnessed valuable achievements in the human rights arena. A significant number of international treaties, mostly relating to the protection of women, children, refugees, and conventions relating to peace and war, have been

adopted. In addition to those treaties, a number of United Nations bodies have been created to fulfil the treaties' objectives. This current Millennium Summit should uphold the unprecedented international and universal achievements which will be conducive to a new global human order.

However, in spite of the progress accomplished in the human rights domain, Arab territories remain under Israeli occupation, their inhabitants suffering continuously under the deliberate and violent infringements of the occupying forces. We remind the international community of the long ordeal of Lebanese citizens, who have been detained for years in Israeli manned jails as hostages, denied due process of law, in defiance of the principles of international laws and conventions, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. We call for their immediate release.

Lebanon strongly hopes that the final declaration to be issued pursuant to our Summit will be a renewed act of faith in the Charter of the United Nations, that its contents will accurately reflect fair, peaceful and constructive solutions to the uncertainties and predicaments of the people of all nations, and that its headlines will bear witness to the Secretary-General's ceaseless endeavour for peace and to his tireless efforts to re-direct the United Nations to a position of high compatibility with the aspirations of future generations.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Michel Kafando, Chairman of the delegation of Burkina Faso.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) *(spoke in French)*: It is a signal honour for me to address this Millennium Summit on behalf of President Blaise Compaore, who very much wished to participate in this. Unfortunately, pressing engagements have prevented him from doing so.

The occasion which brings us together today is unprecedented and provides us all with special opportunity to ask about the future of humankind at the dawn of the third millennium.

The past century saw the birth of the United Nations which set itself the goal of saving us from the scourge of war and of forging between people and nations links of solidarity, friendship and cooperation of a new kind. Despite this political will, strongly expressed at San Fransisco, the United Nations did not succeed in saving the world from the cold war and the unbridled arms race.

We, the small nations, in bodies such as the Non-Aligned Movement, have ceaselessly drawn attention to the dangerous and harmful consequences of this balance of terror. Our leitmotif has always been to reverse this trend and to devote the vast resources which it swallowed up to activities of developing the poor countries.

We are obliged to note that these repeated appeals have not been heard and that the gap between poor and rich countries is today wider than ever.

The phenomenon of globalization seems already to have relegated to oblivion what we have experienced. For us, the developing countries, the same questions, the same concerns remain. Our peoples wonder what globalization can bring them that is more or better. They wonder what impact it can have on their daily concerns and their quest for well-being.

Thus, for us, it is not a question of coming here to follow a ritual, but rather to share our vision of the best way of managing globalization in the clear interest of peoples and nations.

It is a fact that whilst the end of the cold war rang the death knell on East/West antagonism, it in no way reduced the imbalance between rich and poor countries.

Thus we should ask what today is the level of commitment of willingness and the political will of the rich countries, who hold the capital and the technology, to carry out specific actions so as to avoid globalization becoming yet another occasion to marginalize the developing countries.

We are convinced that globalization must go hand in hand with a greater democratization of international relations and with a profound reform of the decision-making procedures within the organizations of the United Nations system, first of all, at the level of the Security Council. By thus giving all nations, small and large, the opportunity to make their contribution to building a more just and fairer world, we will increase our chances of reducing frustrations, sources of tensions and conflicts and we will then better serve the cause of peace, since that is the mission given to our Organization.

For all of these reasons, Burkina Faso appeals to the conscience of humankind so that the Republic of China quickly regain its place within the United Nations so as to guarantee the fundamental right of its twenty-three million inhabitants to participate in the management of the activities of the international community.

In conclusion, we welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century which advocates major actions to be taken in order to equip ourselves better to cope with the major challenges and the concerns of our peoples.

These ideas are taken up in the draft declaration of the Millennium which will be submitted for our adoption at the end of our work.

Our hope is that the Summit will develop, based on this declaration, a plan of action and will create a follow-up mechanism to ensure its effective and diligent implementation.

The meeting rose at 2 p.m.